



**National machinery, action plans
and gender mainstreaming
in the Council of Europe member states
since the 4th World Conference on Women
(Beijing, 1995)**

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The Council of Europe

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The consideration of equality between women and men, seen as a fundamental human right, is the responsibility of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG). The experts who form the Committee (one from each member State) are entrusted with the task of stimulating action at the national level, as well as within the Council of Europe, to achieve effective equality between women and men. To this end, the CDEG carries out analyses, studies and evaluations, defines strategies and political measures, and, where necessary, frames the appropriate legal instruments.

For information on the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of equality between women and men, please consult our website :

<http://www.coe.int/equality>

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¹ Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

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INTRODUCTION

This report was first prepared for the United Nations review in 2000 on the progress made since the conferences of Beijing and Nairobi. The Council of Europe was asked by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to give a substantive contribution to its regional preparatory meeting (Geneva, 19-21 January 2000) on the year 2000 review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Following the request, the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG), agreed that one of the Council of Europe's contributions would be an update of the study from 1994 on national institutional machinery to promote equality between women and men¹. It was also decided that the update would include information on provisions (statutory or other) for gender mainstreaming and action plans for the promotion of equality.

In September 1999, a questionnaire was sent to member states by the Secretariat (see Appendix II). For the elaboration of the report, the Secretariat did not only rely on the answers provided by member states, but also on the Council of Europe 1994 study on national institutional machinery¹ as well as other information documents such as national CEDAW reports or national reports on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

In preparation for the 5th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men (Skopje, 22-23 January 2003), member states were asked, in January 2002, to give updated information on their national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming strategies.

In 2004, the CDEG decided that an updated version of this document could be presented as a contribution of the Council of Europe to the Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing + 10) to be held in March 2005 during the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. To this end, member States were asked, in April 2004, to give updated information on their national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming strategies.

This document takes into account the information received up to 30 November 2004 from 43 member states out of 46.

The Secretariat wishes to thank members of the CDEG for their constant help and co-operation in preparing this document.

¹ National institutional machinery in the Council of Europe member States to promote equality between women and men, comparative study by Eliane Vogel-Polsky with the co-operation of Dominique Rodriguez, Strasbourg 1994 (EG (93) 2 def.).

ALBANIA ¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Department of Women and Family:* This government body, initially established in 1992 as “Sector of Women and Family”, became the Department of Women and Family in 1994. It is part of the Ministry of Labour, Emigration and Social Protection. The goal of the department is to implement the governmental policy for the women of Albania. The budget, which foresees the wages of the employees, is part of the budget of the Ministry.
- *Group of Parliamentary Women:* In 1994, a group of parliamentary women was set up. It was composed of 8 female members of parliament. The group was entitled of the parliamentary commission mandate. The goal of this group was to protect and to promote women’s rights and to raise awareness in the parliament to support and inspire the solution of different issues related to women.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Department of Women and Family:* After the elections in 1996, the Secretary of State for Women and Youth carried out the functions of the Department. Nevertheless, in 1997, the Department of Women and Family was re-created. In July 1998, the Council of Ministers upgraded the Department of Women and Family of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to Council of Ministers level, appointing a Committee of Women and Family reporting directly to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- *Group of Parliamentary Women:* The group was replaced by the Sub-commission for Youth and Women which includes 11 female members of parliament.

After the general election of the 24 July 2001, the Sub-Commission for Youth and Women was replaced with the *Sub-Commission on Equal Opportunities* in the Parliament.

The denomination of the Committee changed in 2001 by decision of the Council of Ministers No. 127/15.03.2001. It is now known as the *Committee on Equal Opportunities*. At the same time, its duties were changed. Now the employees of the *Committee on Equal Opportunities* are working to implement the governmental policies for gender equality in all areas and to improve and propose new legislation on equal opportunities. During three years of the Committee's activity, its qualified staff have been working to improve women's and children's rights. The chairperson of the Committee is responsible for employing people to vacant posts. But the structure and the number of employees of the Committee is determined by the decision of the Council of Ministers. The Equal Opportunities Committee is not part of the

¹ Based on: Replies to the 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming and update provided in 2002; National report on the progress of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Civil Service. The network of focal points at local and national level is stronger now. The focal points have been trained in gender issues. Since December 2001, the Committee has more focal points in local level. Despite the focal points in each prefecture, it has set up a new network in 36 municipalities of the country. The annual budget of the Committee is a part of general budget of the Council of Ministers. It covers wages and a small number of activities. The Committee applies to different donors and works with earned funds in implementing the governmental gender policies in order to realise its goals.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Women and Family Committee*: In 1998, this committee was established by decision of the Council of Ministers. It is located under the Council of Ministers and its chairperson reports directly to the Deputy Prime Minister. The responsibilities of the Women and Family Committee (Council of Ministers decision 415 of 1.7.1998) are:
 - the implementation of governmental policies for women and family issues;
 - the co-ordination of programmes for the promotion of equality between men and women;
 - the implementation and evaluation of governmental programmes;
 - the proposal of new legislation and/or amendments to existing legislation on children's and women's rights in compliance with international standards;
 - the support and co-ordination of NGO activities in the field of women's and family's rights.

The Committee has set up a network of focal points in all Ministries and established an information network with NGOs and other national machineries at the regional and international level. Furthermore, the Committee is working on the setting up of an effective information system to monitor progress countrywide, through the network of focal points appointed in the local government and on the promotion of affirmative actions to be decided by relevant organisations (Parliament, ministries, local government).

The strategy of the Committee is based on CEDAW, on the Beijing Platform for Action and on the National Platform for Women (Council of Ministers' Decision N.267/03.06.1999).

- *The Commission on Equal Opportunities* was created by Decision No. 127/15.03.2001 of the Council of Ministers. The creation of this new structure upgrades the level of national mechanism. The members of this Commission are: The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (Head of Council) and ministers of important ministries such as: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Order, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Chairperson of the Committee on Equal Opportunities. The *Commission on Equal Opportunities* was created in order to design and to implement the national policies on equal opportunities.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The original Action Plan of Albania (never endorsed by the Government) foresaw interventions in all areas of concern indicated in the Beijing Platform for Action. However, this plan was not sustainable for a country as poor as Albania.

In 1998, the *Women and Family Committee* prepared a new plan, which was to be implemented between 1998 and 2000. This platform was expanded in 2001 and must be implemented before 2005. The Governmental Platform for Action focuses on:

- Equality between men and women in politics and decision-making processes;
- Economical empowerment of women;
- Social issues focusing on the work to combat domestic violence and trafficking in human beings;
- Women's health issues;
- Education.

The Committee has organised many seminars in these areas and has successfully implemented different projects to improve the actual situation of Albanian women to realise the Governmental Action Plan. One of the most important steps of the work done by the Committee was the preparation of the CEDAW periodic report (initial and first report). This report is the first one prepared by the Albanian Government.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The new *Commission on Equal Opportunities* is an important step towards gender mainstreaming.

In 2002, the *Commission on Equal Opportunities* will prepare the draft law on equal opportunities.

The *Commission on Equal Opportunities* has prepared a project in collaboration with the Albanian Human Rights Centre and the Institute of Pedagogy in order to include gender issues in the school curricula.

A gender perspective is integrated in the current revision of the *Family Code* (divorce, maintenance, inheritance, custody, foster care).

ANDORRA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

In 1995 Andorra symbolically took part in the Beijing Conference two years after the approval of the Andorran Constitution in 1993 at a time when the country was gradually entering international networks and taking up its international commitments.

On the 15th of January 1997 the Principality of Andorra delivered to the Secretary General of the United Nations' Organisation its instrument of accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which came into force in the Principality on the 14th of February 1997. Two years ago, on the 14th of October 2002 the Government of Andorra delivered to the United Nations' Organization the instrument of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the same Convention.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

In June 2000 an Andorran delegation took part in the 5th Extraordinary Session. The Principality of Andorra took on board the document on new measures and initiatives directed at overcoming existing obstacles to the application of the Beijing Action Program as a reference for the public authorities when drawing up action plans aimed at achieving gender equality.

By a governmental decree on the 6th of June 2001 a first Secretary of State for the Family was appointed for the first time on a proposal from the Minister of Health and Welfare. The State Secretariat for the Family was set up as a single, well-defined structure, which fully integrates aspects related to women. Once the members of his governmental team had been appointed, the Head of Government set the well-being of the population as a priority for the four years of the term of office.

In questions of gender equality, the aim which the Executive laid down for the State Secretariat for the Family was to set out directives to develop projects conceived and planned on the basis of an analysis of the consequences which economic, social, political and cultural pressures exert on family structure and family members (women, children, elderly persons and men). This aim took the form of a desire to find out what gender inequalities existed in family life, work and health in the Principality of Andorra, which might give an orientation to the setting up of priority lines for action.

¹ Information provided in September 2004.

On the 22nd of June 2001 there was an official presentation of the Protocol for Action in Cases of Domestic Violence (PAVD), under the aegis of the Ministries of Health and Welfare and of Justice and Home Affairs, responsible for coordinating and setting procedures for all those involved so as to produce effective answers to the problem of domestic violence in Andorra.

The drawing up of PAVD took place bearing in mind the various spheres of intervention: health, psychosocial, police and judicial as well as the women's associations in the country. It was designed with a community-based methodology closely linked to the specific traits of the country.

PAVD work groups were set up: health, psychosocial and police groups, which aim to offer a space for reflection and in-depth study of the specific subjects in each sphere for intervention. The main objectives of the work groups are: to enhance mutual acquaintance and favour coordination between the professionals involved; to formulate proposals for improvement in the Protocol and also to enable information on their progress to be shared. A work group has been set up for each type of intervention defined in the Protocol and meets once every two months.

The **PAVD follow-up commission** was also set up and comprises at least one representative from each sphere of intervention and is chaired by the Secretary of State for the Family. It aims at being a space for following-up, decision-making and evaluation of the working of the Protocol and at the same time it is also planned that it collect information, detect new needs and make proposals for changes and improvements bearing in mind the work, contributions and reflections of each work group.

The members of this commission are: the Secretary of State for the Family, the Secretary of State for Welfare, the Director of the Police Force, the Director General of SAAS (Andorran Health Care Services), the Head of the Legal and Forensic Medicine Service, the President of the College of Doctors of Andorra, the Dean of the College of Lawyers of Andorra, the President of the College of Psychologists of Andorra and the President of the College of Nurses and Midwives of Andorra.

The Government of Andorra presented the first report on the situation and the follow-up of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to the Committee (CEDAW) on 10 July 2001.

As a result of the recommendations which the Committee made, the Ministry of Health and Welfare set up the guidelines, which form the lines for work in the following years:

- The promotion of responsible social participation set in motion by structuring civil society and encouraging the setting up of associations.
- The struggle against the obstacles which hinder and impede the effective fulfilment of the rights of women and which imply any form of discrimination against them such as: cultural stereotypes and prejudices about the traditional roles of women and men; domestic violence; insufficient income; the negative effects of family break-up.
- The inclusion of the gender perspective in planning and carrying out programs and projects designed to attend to the specific social needs of women (as a particularly vulnerable group).

At the same time, as we have noted in the introduction, on the 14th of October 2002 the Government of Andorra delivered to the United Nations' Organization the instrument of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the same Convention.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

During 2004, with a view to designing an action plan for encouraging gender equality, the Ministry of Health and Welfare in cooperation with the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men of the Council of Europe (CDEG) organized a seminar as part of the preparation of a national action plan for equal opportunities for women and men which took place in Andorra la Vella on the 27th – 28th January. On 16th – 18th June 2004, representatives of the Ministry of Health and Welfare attended the 30th Meeting of the CDEG, all of which makes clear Andorra's wish to follow European provisions with regard to the promotion of effective gender equality.

With regard to all this work carried out, the conclusion has been reached that the promotion of the gender perspective among the various Government departments must be a priority task of the utmost importance and work must begin to implement a transversal gender policy at governmental level.

There has been a redefinition of the strategic lines to guide the work to be done when drawing up a national plan to encourage equal opportunities. These are:

1. The encouragement women's social participation and leadership.
2. The fight against domestic violence.
3. The binomial: woman and work.
4. Attention to vulnerable groups: in particular single women with family responsibilities and elderly women.
5. The incorporation in other Government departments of the gender perspective as a transversal axis when designing actions.

Each of these strategic lines takes the form of general aims, specific aims and actions making up the programs and projects which the Government of Andorra is carrying out in order to achieve gender equality, thus completing the program set out by the State Secretariat for the Family following the recommendations of CEDAW.

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION BY AND THE LEADERSHIP OF WOMEN.

Program for social participation by and the leadership of women. This program is aimed at enhancing social participation by women and the presence of women in positions of responsibility.

- a. Project for social participation by women and encouragement of membership in associations.
- b. Project for information and the raising of social awareness about women's rights: The campaign T'HO CREUS? (DO YOU THINK SO?) to eliminate cultural stereotypes and encourage gender equality of opportunity.
- c. Project for encouraging the presence of women in positions of responsibility and leadership.

THE FIGHT AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

Program for the fight against domestic violence. This program aims to:

1. Guarantee overall care for victims of domestic violence in accordance with the following objectives:
 - See to the proper working of the Protocol for Action in Cases of Domestic Violence by prioritizing coordination between the various institutions responsible for acting in response to the problem.
 - Diversify the availability of specialized resources in care for cases of domestic violence.
 - Sensitize professionals who may intervene in the problem.
2. Inform and sensitize the population with regard to domestic violence.
3. Ascertain the real extent of the problem.

Projects and actions to carry out this program:

- a. The resource of instant care for victims of domestic violence.
- b. Social care for the victims of domestic violence.
- c. Project of the Protocol for Action in Cases of Domestic Violence.
- d. Project for designing and setting up specialized resources for cases of domestic violence.
- e. Project for sensitizing professionals to matters of domestic violence.
- f. Project for information and sensitizing society to domestic violence.
- g. Project for collecting data and setting up a computer program on domestic violence.

THE BINOMIAL: WOMEN AND WORK.

Women and work program. This programs aims to:

- Encourage real, effective gender equality of opportunity in the work place.
 - Promote the balancing of family and working life in Andorra.
 - Project for balancing working and family life.
- a. Project for balancing working and family life

Attention to vulnerable groups: in particular single women with family responsibilities and elderly women.

- b. Social care for single parent families

The incorporation in other government departments of the gender perspective as a transversal axis when designing actions.

With the carrying out of this line work is in progress with other Government departments such as Education, the Police, the Department of Finance and the Department for Multilateral Affairs and Cooperation for Development.

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- a. Coeducation project with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. There is joint work on projects aimed at encouraging equitable situations and the prevention of the arising of bullying.
 - b. The Government of Andorra recognises the particular vulnerability of young and adolescent girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the framework of the Interministerial Commission for International Cooperation it has set up a follow up for the aims of the Millennium Declaration, encouraging the presence of the gender perspective when designing actions carried out, of the overriding interest of the child and governability and democracy as basic criteria for granting subsidies to projects by civil nonprofit making bodies in the social sphere and for deciding on contributions to international bodies and agencies.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Work is currently underway to ensure that other Government departments such as Education, the Police, the Department of Finance and the Department for Multilateral Affairs and Cooperation for Development, semi-public bodies such as the Andorran Health Care Service, the Andorran Social Security Chest, the Institute of Andorran Studies and the University of Andorra as well as civil nonprofits making bodies (mainly the associations of women) should open a budget line taking into account the five priority action lines laid down in January 2004.

This work has shown us that there is a will and a willingness on the part of the various aforementioned Government departments and the cooperation of other nongovernmental bodies in favour of carrying out the programs, projects and actions being drawn up in the sphere of the promotion of the achievement and fulfilment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000).

At present encouragement of gender equality continues to be mainly a priority for the Ministry of Health and Welfare; although there is a tendency to transversal action, work continues in sector by sector planning and action.

ARMENIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

The Republic of Armenia signed the following conventions concerning the advancement of women and the protection of women's rights:

- The 1950 Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value;
- The 1958 Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation;
- The 1957 Convention on the Nationality of Married Women;
- The 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education;
- In 1993 Armenia ratified the "Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women".

The law on employment adopted in 1992 prohibits all forms of discrimination in employment.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia passed a resolution on July 8, 1991 on "the protection of women, maternity and childhood, and the strengthening of the family". This resolution gives women and mothers supplementary rights in the fields of work and social security.

In 1992 the National Assembly adopted a resolution on "Amendments to the Marriage and Family Code of the Republic of Armenia", which stipulates an increase in alimonies.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

The Department for Family, Women's and Children's Issues, comprised of 11 specialists, was established in 1997 in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The aim of the Department is to examine, analyse and assess the needs and problems of women and children, as well as to take appropriate measures for their solution by developing and implementing corresponding state policy.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

The Commission on Human Rights was established in April 1998. In the context of human rights' protection, the commission also deals with women's rights issues. It is attached to the office of the President of the Republic of Armenia.

On December 29, 2000 the "Council on Women Issues" was created. It is headed by the Prime Minister and involves representatives of Ministries and different NGOs,.

In May 2002 a decree of the Prime Minister created the position of Deputy Minister within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs responsible for women's and gender issues in Armenia.

The Deputy Minister supervises the Department for Family, Women's and Children's Issues, coordinates all women-related activities of other Ministries, ensures collaboration with women's non-governmental organisations and enforces compliance with the Convention.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Armenia has signed and ratified over 40 international instruments on human rights, a number of which are directed at the protection of women's rights. These documents (international conventions, treaties) take precedence over national laws, therefore the International Bill of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which contains a general definition of the concept "discrimination against women", and other international treaties all guarantee the equal rights of men and women in Armenia.

In September 2002 under the Prime Minister's Decree, an Intergovernmental Commission was established to develop a national action plan and create mechanisms for the implementation of this plan. The Commission members are Deputy Ministers and Heads of Departments from the Ministries of Health, Education, Foreign Affairs, Culture, Youth and Sport, a member of the National Assembly, as well as the Presidents of four women's NGOs. The Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Affairs heads the Commission.

The Intergovernmental Commission has already developed the "National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women and Enhancing Their Role in Society for 2004-2010". The action plan was submitted to the government, and in April 2004 the document was finally adopted by the President.

In March 2004 the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and United Nations Development Programme launched a new joint Programme on Gender and Politics in Southern Caucasus: Georgia and Armenia.

The aim of the Programme is to help strengthen gender policies in Armenia, build the capacities of women to promote their active involvement in decision-making processes, identify regional and local gender problems, improve the regional strategy on gender promoting to develop the programme of regional activities, as well as to empower the national mechanisms in the view of gender.

There are more than 60 women NGOs promoting women's political, social and cultural rights. Branches have been established in different regions and the organisations have carried out extensive work in raising awareness among women on gender issues. Some of these organisations have been set up along professional lines and bring together women scientists, artists, journalists and entrepreneurs. Other organisations are engaged in social and political activities: environmental protection, protection of mothers and children, and promoting equal rights for men and women, etc.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The “National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women and Enhancing Their Role in Society for 2004-2010” was adopted by the Government.

The Action Plan is based on the relevant provisions of the Republic of Armenia Constitution and is targeted at the fulfilment of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women, the recommendations of the Fourth Beijing Conference (1995), the documents of the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men, the UN Millennium Declaration requirements, and commitments of the Republic of Armenia under other international instruments.

The Action Plan will assist in achieving equal rights and opportunities for women and men, as a prerequisite to shape a democratic, social, and legal state and civil society.

The measures included in the Action Plan will also be helpful in addressing the social and economic problems of women, which will, in turn, help to overcome poverty in the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

The Action Plan comprises seven sections:

- Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in decision-making and in the social and political spheres;
- Improving the Social and Economic Condition of Women;
- Education Sector;
- Improving the Health Condition of Women;
- Eliminating Violence against Women;
- Role of the Mass Media and Cultural Institutions in Reporting on Women’s Issues and Building a Female Role Model;
- Institutional Reforms.

Each section is made up of the following parts: Situation Analysis, an overview of Challenges, Strategies, and Measures to address the issues.

The implementation of the Action Plan will be pursued in close co-operation with international and non-governmental organisations.

AUSTRIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Federal Minister of Women's Affairs*: Established in 1991, this Minister was placed under the Federal Chancellery and thus represented women's issues at the highest political level. The Minister had general responsibility for women's issues affecting several jurisdictions. She co-ordinated women's policies, gathered information and initiated women's policies. Her resources in 1992 and 1993 were 37 million ATS (2 688 895 €) per year.
- *Equal Treatment Commission*: Established in 1979 (1998), this mixed body is attached to the Minister of Women's Affairs. The Ombudsperson working for the commission needs to be a barrister. The commission deals with salary discrimination and other employment discrimination in the private sector. Its objective is to supervise the implementation of the law on non-discrimination of salary (1979). It prepares expert reports at the request of the Ombudsperson or his/her representatives. It also creates sub-commissions and publishes information. The commission does not have a separate budget.
- *Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Employment Opportunities*: the Office was established in 1991 under the *Equal Treatment Act* (for contracts of employment under private law) and is part of the Federal Ministry for Social Security and Generations.

The main tasks of *the Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Employment Opportunities* are:

- to offer advice to women who feel discriminated against in comparison with men at the workplace;
 - to inform the public in Austria on the issue of discrimination of women in employment;
 - to hold consulting hours and to organise discussions in each of the federal provinces.
- The function of the *Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Employment Opportunities* is thus that of a conciliation agency whose aim is to cause the employer, by means of decisions and proposals, to comply with the provisions of the Equal Treatment Act. In a case where such attempts are unsuccessful, a law-suit needs to be filed either by the aggrieved woman herself or by one of the two organisations representing the interests of employees in Austria.

The Equal Treatment Act prohibits the discrimination of women in general and more particularly in regard to:

- the formation of the employment contract;
- the determination of the salary;
- voluntary social benefits not part of the salary;

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

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- measures taken by the employer for training and education of employees;
 - career matters, especially promotions;
 - other working conditions;
 - the termination of the employment contract.

Once a violation has occurred, the Act provides the following remedies: an obligation to comply with the legal requirements, refunds/compensation payments in cases of wage discrimination, and an award of damages in cases of discrimination in connection with job applications, promotions and sexual harassment.

- *Federal Committee for Equality of Treatment*: Established in 1993, this committee is attached to the Chancellery. Its role is to implement the Federal Act of 1993 on Equal Treatment of Women and Men and on the Advancement of Women within all organisations belonging to the Federal public service. It examines complaints and appeals concerning violations of the Act. It formulates opinions on discrimination cases submitted to it and addresses them to the competent Federal authorities while proposing correction or redress measures or strategies for change. The committee does not have a separate budget.
- *Policy Division for Women's Affairs*: Established in 1983 (1988), this administrative unit is attached to the Federal Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs and under direct authority of the Federal Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs. Its objective is to promote equality issues within social policies, to establish programmes for positive action concerning women's employment and their working conditions and to identify future legal measures concerning labour law and social security of women etc. It informs and advises the Federal Minister, carries out research and provides information, produces publications and supports and subsidises women's initiatives.
- *Division of Industrial Relations and Equality Affairs*: This body was established in 1966 as the "Division for Women". It is a division of the Department of Labour Law and Social Policy of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour. The mandate includes promoting equality issues at national and international level within social policy, labour law and labour relations, carrying out research and providing information; cooperating with international organisations in the field of social policy, labour relations and gender equality.
- *Division for Labour Market Policy and Gender Equality*: The Division is an administrative unit attached to the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour. It is a division of the Directorate for Labour Market Policies and its objective is to promote gender equality issues and women's issues in labour market policies. Fields of activity are gender impact assessment/gender mainstreaming, research and analyses especially regarding gender gaps in employment and gender pay inequality, information, support for women's initiatives.
- *Equality Liaison Officers*: Established in 1978 (1980), this central unit is placed in the Department on Employment Market Policy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Its objective is to improve women's situation on the labour market. It has no separate budget.
- *Working Parties on questions of equal treatment*: Established in 1993, this institution is provided for in each Ministry. The parties are responsible for questions on equal treatment and the promotion of women within the Ministry.

- *Division for the elimination of sexual bias in young girls' and women's education:* Established in 1989, this body is attached to the Federal Ministry of Education and Arts. Its objective is to eliminate discrimination in the school education system according to the UN Convention and to take measures to promote equal rights.
- *Division for Gender Issues and Equality in Education:* The Division was established as the *Division for Women's Issues in Education* in 1989 and it is attached to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Its objective is to eliminate discrimination in the school education system according to the UN Convention and to take measures to promote equal rights.
- *Division of Women's Affairs:* Division attached to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management. The Division is in charge of:
 - Extension Service, adult education, rural youth (4H Clubs);
 - Further training or in-service training for teachers and advisors in agriculture, home economics and forestry;
 - Preparation of extension service teaching materials for implementing of extension project;
 - Co-ordination of programmes for women farmers at federal level;
 - International work.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *In 1997 The Federal Minister of Women's Affairs* was turned into Minister for Women's Affairs and Consumer Protection and then in 2003, it became the Ministry of Health and Women. The office is still attached to the Federal Chancellery.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

Ministry of Health and Women:

- *Division of Women's Affairs:* This body was set up in the Federal Chancellery in 1997 in order to support the Minister for Women's Affairs in her work at civil service level. The Division was transferred from the Federal Chancellery to the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations in April 2000 and to the Federal Ministry of Health and Women in 2003. The competence of the Division covers the establishment of women's politics: concepts, studies, and measures as well as the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies in Austria, the promotion of projects, measures on violence against women, women and health and equality concerning employment discrimination in the private sector and the civil service and Women's Affairs at international level.

The *Equal Treatment Act of 2004*, set up a new Ombud for Equal Opportunities in the Ministry for Health and Women which consists of three specialised departments:

1. Ombud for Equal employment Opportunities between Men and Women, which was established in 1991 and coordinates the work of the three departments;
2. Ombud for Equal employment Opportunities concerning the grounds of ethnic minority, religion, sexual orientation and age (to be established);
3. Ombud for Equal Opportunities concerning the ground of ethnic minority in goods and services (to be established).

According to the new law the **area of authority** of the Ombud for equal employment opportunities between Men and Women now comprises:

- the whole world of work including freelance contracts, access to self-employed work, access to training;
- access to cooperation and membership in employer's and employee's organisations and access to services of these organisations;
- new provisions against harassment and victimisation;
- full equality between women and men as a general goal.

New competences of the Gender Equality Ombud are:

- coordination between the three Ombuds-institutions;
 - counselling and support in case of multiple discrimination when gender is touched;
 - independent reports and surveys on all matters of discrimination;
 - The first regional office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities was established in Innsbruck in November 1998, followed by regional offices for the south of Austria in Graz (Styria) 2000, in Klagenfurt (Carinthia) 2001 and one in Linz (Upper Austria) in 2002.
- *Two Equal Treatment Commissions*: One for the private sector and one for the civil service. The Commissions have to deal with all questions related to discrimination based on sex in connection with an employment relationship in general and more particularly with regard to:
- Establishment of an Employment relationship;
 - Rates of pay;
 - Voluntary social benefits;
 - Company vocational training;
 - Professional advancement, promotion;
 - Employment conditions;
 - Termination of the employment contract;
 - and sexual harassment.
- *Department for Industrial Relations and Equality Affairs* within the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour. The mandate includes promoting equality issues at national and international level within social policy, labour law and labour relations.
- *Working Parties on questions of equal treatment*: Established in 1993, these groups exist in every Ministry. The working parties are responsible for questions of equal treatment and the promotion of women within the Ministries. Their representatives gather in the *Interministerial working group on questions of equal treatment (IMAG)*.
- *Department for Science of Society*: This is a department for policy-oriented university research dealing with statistics, information, reports and promotion of professional women and attached to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Since 1997 its priority research programme relates to women in science and research. It aims at carrying out projects (accompanied by an Advisory Board) for the promotion of women at university level, establishing data banks etc.
- Since the year 1997, the Ministry of Education has started two comprehensive action plans to promote gender equality (Action Plan 2000 and Action Plan 2003). Gender

sensitive vocational orientation, purposeful implementation of the teaching principle, education in equality of women and men, development of networks, school quality and equal opportunities and women and new technologies are some of the main points of the Action Plan 2003.

- *Department for the elimination of sexual bias in young girls' and women's education* within the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Its objective is to eliminate discrimination in the school education system according to the UN Convention and to take measures to promote equal rights.
- *Department for Men's Affairs*: This department acts within the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations. Since the beginning of 2001 the *Department for Men's Affairs* is responsible for research in this field, for supervising the implementation of legislation from a specific male viewpoint, for the promotion and for supporting initiatives for men.

Consultants for Women's Affairs at provincial level: all the Laender have special working units for women's affairs.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The measures Austria has taken, and will take in the future, to implement the demands laid down in the Platform for Action of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women for the full participation of women on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, include in particular:

- The creation of a statutory framework for the promotion of the equality of women and men in all spheres of life;
- Maintenance and creation of jobs for women, designing special support measures for women re-entering the labour market after periods of unemployment;
- Measures encouraging the diversification of occupational choices for women and the upgrading of women's skills with the aim of increasing their numbers in leading positions in politics, business, administration, science and other important spheres of society;
- Guaranteeing the compatibility of career and family;
- Improvement in the statutory provisions for the social security of older women;
- Providing for the basic material and non-material needs of women and their children;
- Measures to prevent violence and to help victims of violence.

Other action taken comprised the 25-Point Catalogue of Measures against Violence, the Plan of Action 2000 – 99 measures for the promotion of equality in schools and adult education, the Plan of Action to promote women in science and the "Vienna Declaration". This declaration contains recommendations for a European Action Plan to enforce women's participation in information and communication technologies.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Austria considers gender mainstreaming as another method to reveal the structural obstacles impeding the active participation of women in all spheres of life.

In accordance with political and legal standards, an inter-ministerial working group for Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG Gender Mainstreaming) was formed in the Federal Ministry of Health and Women in summer 2000, following a decision of the Council of Ministers for the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy at federal governmental level.

In March 2001, an all-day training seminar was organised for the members of IMAG Gender Mainstreaming. Referring to the results of the training the IMAG GM formed three working groups which discuss the following topics:

Projects and guides

Task: Elaboration of analytical tools for the planning, application and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in projects and new laws

Information, building up awareness and sensitivity

Task: Elaboration of measures and concepts for extensive dissemination of information on gender mainstreaming

Structuring, resources and representation

Task: Elaboration of concepts for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the administration taking into account financial and personnel resources.

The recommendations (results of the working groups) have been the basis for a further decision of the Council of Ministers, in April 2002, to define the governmental priorities in the field of gender mainstreaming for the coming year.

May 2002: launch of the gender mainstreaming website within the Federal Ministry of Health and Women (www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at). Its aim is to give an overview of all activities at national and regional level, to present best practices at national and international level and to create a GM network. During an expert meeting in December 2003 practical steps for the implementation of gender trainings were worked out.

The Co-ordination Unit for Gender Mainstreaming within the ESF - the GeM Co-ordination Unit, is another information forum and platform focusing on gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities in the labour market.

The knowledge about the principle of gender mainstreaming was included in the recent directive regarding job training at the national employment service.

In March 2003, a round table discussion was organised with national and international gm-trainers in order to define quality criteria for gender trainers.

In March 2004 a third decision of the Council of Ministers was made to enforce the establishment of gender mainstreaming in all ministries and policies.

AZERBAIJAN¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

There was no special national institutional machinery responsible for promoting gender issues in the Republic. The observance of human rights of women, equality and improvement of their social conditions was implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other governmental agencies.

In 1994, the National Preparatory Committee for the IVth World Conference on Women was established by presidential decree. The Committee was also responsible for the national report of the Republic.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

None.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- The *State Committee for Women's Issues* was established on January 14, 1998 by Decree of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, and is attached to the Cabinet of Ministers.

Among its tasks: design and implementation of the governmental policy on gender equality; encouraging women's active participation in public life and decision-making; raising public awareness on gender issues; advocacy; protection of women's rights in political, economic, social and domestic spheres.

The *State Committee for Women's Issues* has established the Intersectoral Council which comprises gender focal points, representing all ministries, committees and women's NGOs. It is a nationwide coordinating body which monitors the realisation of the State Programme's gender policy.

This period was characterised by a widespread network of newly established women's NGOs, creating opportunities for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action.

In December 2001 the National Parliament adopted the Constitutional Law on the establishment of the Institute of Ombudsperson on human rights.

¹ Last update provided in August 2004.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The National Plan of Action on Women's Policy (2000-2005) was elaborated by the State Committee for Women's Issues in close cooperation with all relevant ministries and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in March 2000. The NPA considers national priorities and situation in the Republic and defines adequate measures related to all areas of concern defined in the Beijing Platform, of which the following have been of primary importance: "Women and Violence", "Women in Armed Conflicts", "Women refugees and IDPs".

The NPA reflects the government's commitment to gender equality, and the country's special attention to the role of women in social and economic development of the country.

Decrees of the President of Azerbaijan "On strengthening the role of women" of 1998 and "On Implementation of the National Gender Policy" of 2000 recognise gender equality as an inherent constituent of state policy, an integral component of the civil society.

The latter entitles the government structures to ensure equal representation of women and men in the state administration, equal possibilities for women within the framework of ongoing economic reforms and provision of gender expertise on the national legislature.

A draft law on "Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities" has been submitted to Parliament.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The State Committee for Women's Issues has initiated the work done by the focal points within the bodies of the Executive Powers in all administrative districts of the Republic, creating conditions for gender mainstreaming development.

The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Tourism has worked out the State Programme entitled "Young Families", adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers. The Programme is focused on implementation of strategic objectives referring to the issues of reproductive health, gender advocacy, etc.

As a follow-up to the presidential decree of 2000, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Programme for women refugees and IDPs, aimed at providing relevant employment in refugee camps.

Azerbaijan is implementing a number of actions to eliminate existing gender inequality in combination with its poverty alleviation efforts. Taking the lead role is the State Programme on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development (SPPRED). There is already official recognition in Azerbaijan that poverty can affect women and men in different ways and that policies have to take into account these differences. At present international organizations extend support and assistance to measures related to gender and women issues. Great efforts have been made to ensure that gender issues are reflected in the priorities formulated in SPPRED. One of the main conditions for successful implementation of the SPPRED will be further attempts to increase gender awareness in programme monitoring in the implementation phase.

BELGIUM ¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- *Minister of Employment:* Since 1992, this minister has overall responsibility for policies for equal opportunities between men and women at federal level. He/She replaced, at a higher level of decision, the State Secretary for Social Emancipation who had been responsible for female emancipation since 1985.
- *Equal Opportunities Department:* This body was established in 1992 by Ministerial Decree. It was formed by merging the Department for Social Emancipation and the secretariat of the Women's Labour Commission, which had existed since 1974. Under the authority of the Secretariat General of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour, it operates mainly through 3 different units: Employment, violence and decision-making. Its objective is to promote initiatives aimed at guaranteeing equal opportunities for women and men as well as to co-ordinate policies to promote a better insertion of women in all areas of life. It disseminates information, raises awareness, prepares legal and statutory texts relating to equality, studies or stimulates studies in the field of equality, gives advice and technical assistance to public and private bodies and develops positive action. It has no separate budget. An annual complementary budget is available for the equal opportunities policy, including the budget granted to the Council for Equal Opportunities. In 1999, this budget amounted to approx. 2.563 million €.
- *Council for Equal Opportunities between men and women:* This consultative council was established in 1993 by Royal Decree. It was formed by merging the Council for Social Emancipation and the Women's Labour Commission. It is attached to the Ministry of Employment and Labour. The aim of this mixed body is to contribute to the elimination of all sorts of discrimination of men and women and to the achievement of real equality between the sexes. It prepares reports, carries out research, suggests legal or statutory measures and provides and disseminates information. It disposes of sufficient qualified personnel. In 1993, its resources amounted to 29 747 €.
- *Commission Women and Development:* This commission was established by Royal Decree in 1993. It is attached to the general administration of the international co-operation. Its overall objective is to improve the status of women in the Third World. In the sphere of "women and development", it advises the Minister on the elaboration and implementation of a policy, gives advice on all related questions, co-ordinates and exchanges information and promotes public awareness-raising. The budget in 1999 was approx. 74 370 €.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

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- *Unit Women and Development*: This unit was established in 1981 and is in operation since 1987. It is attached to the general administration of international co-operation. It shares its objectives with the Commission for Women and Development. It ensures the integration of the gender perspective into the general policy of international co-operation and its follow-up at the national and international levels. It does not have a separate budget.
 - *Advisory Committee for Social Emancipation*: This parliamentary commission was established in 1987 and attached to the Lower House of the Federal Parliament. It ensures that due respect is given to emancipation policies in legal projects and government programmes. It gives advice and adopts resolutions. It does not have a separate budget.

FRENCH COMMUNITY

- *Department for Equal Opportunities*: In 1994, this department replaced the Department for the cultural and professional Promotion of Women which had been established in 1985.

WALLOON REGION

- *Regional Women's Commission*: Established in 1994, this body is set up at the Economic and Social Council of the Walloon Region. This mixed body elaborates opinions on drafts, Decrees, orders and regulations in all regional fields concerning women (housing, health, training, employment). It also proposes actions to be implemented and plays an information and awareness-raising role in the field of equality. It does not have a separate budget.

FLEMISH COMMUNITY

- *Emancipation Service*: The service was established in 1991 by Decree of the Flemish Executive. It is located within the human resources administration of the Flemish Community. Its objective is to promote equal opportunities within the administration. It has to ensure the implementation of the positive action programme within the administration.
- *Flemish Women's Concertation Commission*: Established in 1990 by the Flemish Government, this consultative body is part of the Economic and Social Council of Flanders. The objective of this mixed body is the promotion of the position of women in the economic and social sector. It gives opinions to the Economic and Social Council, makes recommendations and carries out studies in the socio-economic sphere. The Commission does not have a separate budget.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Minister of Employment*: from July 1999 to June 2003, the Deputy Prime Minister, who was also Minister for Employment, held responsibility for equal opportunities; since July 2003, following parliamentary elections, it has been the Minister for the Civil service, social integration and city policy who is in charge of equality policy.
- *Equal Opportunities Department*: In 1999, this federal department merged with the Unit for Positive Actions of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour. Thus, the responsibilities of the department have been developed as regards employment and particularly as regards the implementation of a positive action policy in the private sector. The department then changed title, becoming the Equality directorate. After the creation of the Institute for equality between women and men (see paragraph 1.2.2 below) it was disbanded and its staff transferred to the Institute in June 2003.
- The *Vlaamse Overlegcommissie Vrouwen* (Flemish Women's Concertation Commission) operating within the framework of the Economic and Social Council of the Flemish Community was abolished in 2000; it was considered as no longer necessary, since the authorities had opted for a gender mainstreaming policy in all the fields of action of the Economic and Social Council.
- *Emancipation Service, Flemish Women's Concertation Commission, Advisory Committee for the Social Emancipation*: These three Flemish institutions still exist, but it is the three new institutions that now provide the framework within which they work (see 1.2.2).

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- *Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities between women and men*: Established in 1996, this parliamentary commission is attached to the High Chamber of the Federal parliament. Its objective is to ensure the follow-up and the evaluation of legislative initiatives and government policies from an equal opportunities point of view, as well as to give incentives in order to orient legislation and government policy towards greater concern for equal opportunities. It gives advice, adopts resolutions and produces reports. It does not have a separate budget.
- *Institute for equality between women and men*: this Institute was created by the law of 16 December 2002 (Belgian official journal of 31/12/2002). Its purpose is to ensure respect for equality between women and men, combat all forms of discrimination and inequality based on gender and draw up instruments and strategies based on gender mainstreaming.

It took over the prerogatives assigned to the Equality directorate of the Federal Public Service for Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, as well as the latter's staff, who were transferred on 1 June 2003.

The Institute is authorised to:

- carry out, develop, support and coordinate studies and research in the area of gender and equality, assess the impact in gender terms of the policies, programmes and measures implemented;
- make recommendations to public authorities with a view to improving laws and regulations;
- make recommendations to public authorities and private individuals and institutions based on the findings of studies and research mentioned under point 1;
- organise support for associations active in the equality field or projects aimed at achieving equality between women and men;
- assist, within the limits of its brief, any individual seeking to ascertain the extent of their rights and obligations, helping them to obtain information and advice on how to exercise their rights;
- take legal action in disputes that might arise from the application of criminal legislation and other laws specifically intended to guarantee equality between women and men;
- produce and supply any information, documentation and archive material useful to its work;
- gather and publish, with no possibility of identifying the parties in question, statistical data and court decisions useful for evaluating laws and regulations on equality;
- request, in cases where the Institute can cite facts suggesting the existence of discriminatory treatment within the meaning of laws and regulations on equality, that the competent authority investigate and pass on its findings. The authorities must inform the Institute of intended follow-up, giving reasons;
- create a network involving the different players in the equality field;

FRENCH COMMUNITY

- *Directorate of Equal Opportunities:* This directorate was set up in 1997 at the Ministry of the French Community, replacing the Equal Opportunities Department. It is dependent on the Minister-President of the Government and is administratively attached to the Secretariat General of the Department. Its missions are to promote equal opportunities in the spheres for which the French Community is responsible, to serve as a centre of resources and exchange, to inform and support associations and to help initiate new projects in order to establish a concrete policy regarding equal opportunities. It ensures the follow-up to international, European and francophone activities in the field of equal opportunities. In 2004 its budget amounts to 724 825,000 €.
- Advisory Committee responsible for the Examination of Questions related to Equal Opportunities between men and women of the Parliament of the French Community: This advisory parliamentary committee was established in 1999 and is composed of 9 members, proportionally representing the recognised political parties. It gives advice on questions related to equal opportunities at the request of the President of Parliament, parliamentary commissions or at its own initiative. The committee does not dispose of a separate budget but, if necessary, it can obtain subsidies.
- *Equal opportunities coordination unit:* the unit, set up by a decree of 18 April 2002, is made up of staff from the Ministry and public interest bodies. Its task is to produce opinions on all matters relating to equal opportunities, at its own initiative or at the request of the Minister responsible for equal opportunities. The coordination unit is also responsible for drawing up a plan for promoting equal opportunities, which is non-binding

and comprises two sections: the first section reports on the situation for each of the prerogatives assigned to the French Community; the second sets out a list of proposed initiatives for promoting equal opportunities within the framework of each of those prerogatives. The coordination unit, whose secretariat services and chairing are provided by the Equal Opportunities directorate, was set up in February 2003 and submitted its plan for promoting equal opportunities to the Minister with that brief on 25 February 2004.

WALLOON REGION

- *Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities between men and women:* This committee was established in 1996 and attached to the Walloon Parliament. Its objective is to examine, within the regional competencies, the inequalities still existing between women and men. The committee gives advice, develops gendered statistics and examines women's situation as regards poverty etc. It does not have a separate budget.

FLEMISH COMMUNITY

- *Flemish Minister responsible for the Equal Opportunities Policy:* This Minister was first appointed in June 1995. She is responsible for the overall (horizontal) equal opportunities policy of Flanders beyond all policy fields and levels. Moreover, she conducts a specific (vertical) equal opportunities policy with its own priorities and means. The Flemish equal opportunities policy is directed at women and minority groups: women, gays, migrants, children and senior citizens. Besides equal opportunities, the current minister is also responsible for welfare and health. The "Equal Opportunities in Flanders" budget amounted to 123 947 € in 1995 and 2 196 337 € in 1999. Under the following Parliament the budget rose from 2,843,399 € to 4,395,000 € in 2004.
- *Equal Opportunities in Flanders Service:* This administrative unit was set up within the Ministry of Flanders in June 1995 and went into operation in 1996. It is attached to the Ministry of Flanders and operates at the highest level of the Co-ordination Department of the Ministry. Due to its establishment in this department, all policy fields of the Flemish community are covered. Its objective is to support the policy of the Minister for Equal Opportunities. It contributes to the elaboration of equal opportunities policy as well as to its implementation and it assesses the outcome of these policies. So far, the service does not have sufficient (qualified) personnel.

Unit of the "European employment" division (responsible for supervising Flemish European Social Fund projects): This unit plays a key role in ensuring that workplace equality is taken into account through Flemish projects implemented with European Social Fund backing.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Since the mid 70s, Belgium has developed an active policy for the promotion of equality between women and men.

In 1996, a law was published at federal level concerning the monitoring of the application of the resolutions reached at the Beijing Conference. Each year, three reports have to be presented to Parliament on policies concerning the objectives of the Beijing Conference. The first report is prepared by the government. The two other reports are prepared by the minister responsible for equal opportunities and the State Secretary for development co-operation,

covering only the fields lying within their responsibility. Since 2001 the reports are regrouped in one document. In 2004 Parliament will examine the report covering the period 2002-2003.

Similarly, the *Beijing Act* of May 13 1997 obliges the Flemish Government to annually report to the Parliament of Flanders on the action it has taken to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The Flemish Government has already drawn up six reports for the Flemish Parliament. In 2004, in addition to the 2003-04 report, it will also produce an overall evaluation of ten years of equality policy in Flanders.

On 19 December 2002, the Parliament of the French Community adopted a decree following up the resolutions of the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing. The decree asked the Government to produce an annual report on the progress made and measures taken under the policy pursued in accordance with the Beijing Platform objectives. Two such reports have been submitted to the Parliament of the French Community: from September 1999 to September 2002 and from September 2002 to September 2003. Specifically, they were presented to the Committee on international and European relations.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Gender mainstreaming is slowly starting to find its way into policy-making and legislation after the launching of an awareness-raising and information campaign (e.g. by the EU).

In the federal public administration a governmental agreement was struck at the end of 2000 on gender mainstreaming in federal policies. Each of the ministers identified a policy in which gender mainstreaming would be pursued. In this connection the federal public administration was assisted by experts drawn from universities, and an assessment was carried out in 2002. Tools were developed to facilitate the mainstreaming process and generalise it. Similarly, a gender budgeting experiment was carried out in 2001-02 in several government programmes. However, the introduction of a gender mainstreaming strategy with gender budgeting included is a long-term process entailing numerous stages of awareness-building and learning. While the tangible results in terms of impact on people's lives throughout Belgian society are still fairly modest, the foundations have been laid for a change of mentality within the federal authorities and small steps towards promoting equality have been taken in numerous departments.

When experts evaluated the gender mainstreaming project carried out at the beginning of 2003 their recommendations focused mainly on the institutionalisation of the process, which requires long-term efforts and clear objectives, on continued information work and awareness-building on the equality issue particularly for the higher echelons of the administrative and political hierarchy, gearing the objective of equality to the organisational realities in the public administration, and on the role of expertise and necessary assistance that should be played by the Institute for equality between women and men. At the time of drafting this report, proposals for institutionalising the mainstreaming process, including gender budgeting, drawn up in the light of experience gained with these two projects, were under discussion.

In 2004 the Flemish Ministry will certainly undergo a complete overhaul. Responsibility for equality will be placed within the remit of the Minister-President, who will pursue both a horizontal and vertical policy. Gender mainstreaming should be easier to implement as a result, since the Minister-President has a right of intervention in all the fields of competence of the Flemish Government. The Equal Opportunities in Flanders unit will now only focus on women and homosexuals and also on the theme of accessibility. It is important to stress that

this structural reform will facilitate implementation of gender mainstreaming, in contrast to the past situation where each decision-maker had to be persuaded to implement initiatives within their own policy sector.

The Equal Opportunities in Flanders unit will continue to devise and monitor methodologies facilitating gender mainstreaming, and cooperation with structural entities will be stepped up. The unit monitors developments in mainstreaming on a day-to-day basis in order to identify when the time is right to introduce gender budgeting.

As regards monitoring and developing indicators, a *Resolution on equality between women and men in the French Community* was adopted by the French Community Parliament on 14 January 2002. In particular this recommended that the Government of the French Community encourage the production of *gender-specific data* by all French Community bodies and strive to develop and coordinate statistical databases.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF BEIJING CONFERENCE

At the time of Beijing Conference, the national institutional machinery that would promote gender equity did not exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The existing laws were not discriminatory, nor were they gender sensitive, which means that laws were gender neutral.

BiH went through a difficult war period (1992-1995), which indeed had an impact on the creation of the legislative framework and, in particular, the protection of women and women's rights.

The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which BiH took over by succession in 1993, came into effect in October 1993.

In 1995, representatives of BiH were present in Beijing, and on behalf of the BiH state signed the Beijing Platform for Action.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

The signing of the agreement on Gender Equity and Equality Project in BiH (GEEP) between the governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Finland, which occurred at the end of 1999, and the implementation of this project induced the creation of circumstances required for determination and implementation of policy on gender equality and the affirmation of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The main goal of the GEEP project is the creation of conditions necessary for gender mainstreaming in BiH, and some of its desired results are: increasing BiH awareness on the need to create equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of social life, the establishment of local legal frameworks in this field, establishment and strengthening of institutional frameworks for implementation of gender mainstreaming etc.

¹ Information provided in June 2004.

Hence, the governments of the Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federacija Bosna i Hercegovina (FbiH) established Gender Centres, as their expert services, with the following main goals:

- to monitor women's status and implementation of their rights;
- to cooperate with RS and FbiH institutions;
- to participate in the preparation of laws, other regulations and general enactment, in order to achieve equal rights and liabilities in the development process;
- to collect initiatives for amendments of legislation, from the gender aspect;
- to establish cooperation with local and international NGOs, and to coordinate implementation of local and international programs;
- to participate in the preparation of the reports of competent bodies for international institutions on the situation in respect to signed conventions and other documents on gender issues;
- to inform the public on significant issues of women's-human rights, etc.

The Gender Centre of the FbiH Government was established in 2000, and the Gender Centre of RS Government was established in 2001.

Bodies competent for gender issues, i.e. gender equality, were established in the system of legislative and executive authority at all levels of organisation of powers in BiH.

In respect to the legislative authorities at state level, The House of Representatives of BiH Parliamentary Assembly established in 1999 the Commission for Gender Equality in BiH. At the Federation of BiH level, the FbiH House of Representatives (2000) and The House of People (2003), established the Gender Equality Commission, whereas the RS National Assembly established the Commission for Improvement of Women's Status.

The Gender Centres of RS and FbiH initiated the creation of similar commissions at cantonal and municipal level.

The main tasks of established commissions are the assessment and commenting of all draft regulations and other material developed by the competent legislative body, participation in the preparation of certain materials developed by ministries, etc.

One of post-requirements imposed by the Council of Europe was the creation of gender equity and equality instruments within the framework of entity executive authorities.

Regarding the executive authority at state level, decision was made in April 2004 to form the Gender Equality Agency, which was obligation envisaged by the Law on Gender Equality that came into force in June 2003.

As mentioned above, Gender Centres operate at the entity level, as gender equality expert services of RS and FbiH Governments, functioning within the above-described mandate.

It is also important to emphasise that within state and entity ministries individuals were appointed as gender focal persons, having a task to cooperate with Gender Centres and future Gender Equality Agency.

As initiated by Gender Centres, gender equality committees/commissions were established at cantonal and local/municipal level. Their task is to create the conditions for implementation of the Law on Gender Equality at cantonal and local level, to promote gender equity and equality, to cooperate with NGOs dealing with this issue in local communities.

Furthermore, many NGOs direct their activities towards the protection of human rights and the creation of requirements for increasing awareness on gender equality.

2. HAS ANY PLAN OF ACTION FOR PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUITY AND ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN CREATED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet adopted its State Plan of Action for the improvement of women's status. The text of the State Plan of Action is first developed at the entity level, with the commitment of all the participants in its creation as well as the coordinator who will assemble all the proposals in order to create a unique text for Bosnia and Herzegovina. As it is planned that the State Plan of Action will be adopted in the course of 2004, it is assumed that Bosnia and Herzegovina will be able to work on its implementation in 2005. The future State Plan of Action will cover all the areas envisaged in the Beijing Platform, which means that it will be suggested to BiH Parliament and Government that they should act strategically and undertake actions in all the areas covered, with clearly defined goals, objectives, and action leaders. In respect to the period of time covered, the State Plan of Action will define activities for a five-year period.

Taking into consideration the previous work of competent and all other institutions in BiH on the improvement of women's position and gender equality, it can already be affirmed that priorities will be:

- creation of the preconditions for implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, which encompasses Governments' capacity building, i.e. strengthening of institutional mechanisms for gender issues and civil society;
- strengthening of the capacities of Gender Equality Commissions at local level;
- harmonisation of all laws, at all levels, with the Law on Gender Equality;
- improvement of gender disaggregated statistical data in all aspects of life and work;
- continuation of the procedure for introducing the gender component in educational processes at all levels;
- media promotion of gender issues and sensitisation of media professionals;
- increasing men and women's awareness on gender equality and its importance for future development and prosperity of society;
- supporting and promoting female politicians.

3. WERE ANY OF THE PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING ADOPTED AFTER BEIJING CONFERENCE?

- The decision to establish the FBiH Gender Centre was adopted at the end of 2000, by the FBiH Government; the decision to establish the RS Government's Gender Centre was adopted at the end of 2001.

- The decision to establish the Gender Equality Commission at state level was adopted by the House of People of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly in 1999.

- In May 2003, the BiH Parliamentary Assembly adopted the Law on Gender Equality, which defines direct and indirect discrimination, gender-based violence, harassment and sexual harassment, and introduces penalties for perpetrators of listed assaults. Also, the Law defines and provides for general directives for actions by institutions and physical entities in institutions, in order to respect gender equality principles in areas of:

- Education;
- Employment, work and access to all types of resources;
- Social welfare;
- Health care;
- Sport and culture;
- Public life;
- The media;
- Prohibition of violence.

The Law defines the obligations of competent authorities at all levels to adopt programs and measures to achieve gender equality in all areas of life, and to adopt new or initiate changes of the existing laws in order to harmonise them with provisions of the Law on Gender Equality.

The Project on Implementation of the Law on Gender Equality endeavours to develop partnership between Governments and civil society in order to achieve gender equity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to strengthen institutional capacities for the introduction of gender mainstreaming in all sectors of social life.

BULGARIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

The observance and protection of human rights is a constitutional duty for all State institutions at national and local level. Consequently, the promotion of equality between women and men is performed by all government ministries and agencies, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Health as well as other ministries/agencies and the local governments. Therefore, a separate single national institution to promote equality was not deemed to be necessary in these circumstances.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

and

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

In the last few years the Republic of Bulgaria has revised its vision in regard to the establishment of national institutions responsible for gender equality and serious steps have been and continue to be taken in this direction.

Since 2000 the **Minister of Labour and Social Policy** has been charged with the formulation and implementation of the **state policy** in the field of equal opportunities for women and men in labour and social sphere, and since the end of 2002 – in all spheres. In 2000 an expert dealing with gender equality issues was appointed to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, and on 1 March 2004 the “Gender equality” Sector was established in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. With this the efforts for strengthening the state administration are not over. Further development and extension of the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy will take place.

In February 2003 a **Consultative Commission for equal opportunities of women and men** was established in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The commission comprises representatives of state institutions, social partners and NGOs.

In accordance with the Law on Protection against discrimination a procedure for appointing members of the **Commission on Protection against Discrimination** is under way. This Commission will play an important role in enforcement of gender equality *de facto*. The Commission will work in three panels, one which is responsible for cases of discrimination based on sex. Cases of **multiple discrimination** (i.e. discrimination on more than one

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

ground) will be dealt with by an extended panel of five members of the Commission. The establishment of the Commission is also important because it is charged with carrying out independent studies on discrimination and publishing independent reports and giving recommendations on all issues related to discrimination. During the second half of 2004 it is planned to establish a **National Council on Gender Equality** in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy or in the Council of Ministers.

With regard to further development of the national machinery in 2004 training for 100 experts from the state administration is planned. This will allow establishment of focal points in each institution.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

New developments:

Elaboration of a new National Action Plan on gender equality is planned for the end of 2004 (after the establishment of the National Council on Gender Equality with regard to the effective involvement of the civil society).

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Law on protection against discrimination adopted in September 2003 and in force since 1 January 2004 contains, beside general rules and tools for guaranteeing equality and the fight against discrimination (including on the grounds of sex), several provisions related to gender mainstreaming. Such as:

Article 35

- (1) Persons, providing training or education, as well as the compilers of textbooks and learning materials, are obliged to give information and to apply methods of training and education in a way, focused on overcoming the stereotype of the roles of women and men in all spheres of the public and family life.
- (2) The kindergartens, schools and high schools shall include in their educational curricula and plans training on the problems of the equality of women and men.
- (3) Paragraph 1 shall apply also to overcoming the negative stereotypes towards racial, ethnic and religious groups, as well as towards persons with disabilities.

Article 38

The state and public bodies and the bodies of local self-government shall conduct a policy to encourage the balanced participation of women and men, as well as for the representative participation of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or language minorities in the governance and the decision-making.

Article 39

- (1) If the candidates for a position in the administration are equivalent in view of the requirements for occupying the position, the state and public bodies and the bodies of local self-government shall employ the candidate of the under represented sex until the achievement of a 40% representation in the respective administrative units.
- (2) Paragraph 1 shall apply also in the selection of participants or board members, expert working groups, governing, counsellor or other bodies, unless those participants are determined by means of election.

It must be noted that the law is based on the principle of responsibility of state authorities for ensuring of equality, including gender equality, which also reflects the idea of gender mainstreaming.

CROATIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

At the time of the Beijing Conference there was no national institutional machinery to promote gender equality

In the application of the legislation related to women's rights, all competent sectoral authorities were entrusted with the promotion and protection of human rights of women.

In 1994, an *ad hoc* national commission for the preparation of Croatia's participation in the 4th World Conference on Women was established. The establishment of this commission marked the beginning of the development of the national machinery.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

In 1996, the *Commission for Equality Issues* was established as the government advisory body composed of representatives of ministries and other relevant institutions. Its objective was to monitor and promote National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 1997-2000 in the Republic of Croatia.

In 2000, the principle of gender equality became an integral part of the Croatian Constitution and the Commission changed its name to the *Commission for Gender Equality*.

In 2001, the Commission prepared and the Croatian Parliament adopted in December 2001 the new *National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2001-2005*

In 2001, the Government of the Republic of Croatia established the *Office for Human Rights*, as the main coordinative body for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Republic of Croatia. The *Secretariat of the Commission for Gender Equality* was formed within this new *Office for Human Rights*.

The *Committee for Gender Equality* was formed in the Croatian Parliament in 2001.

In July 2003 the *Gender Equality Law* was adopted by the Croatian Parliament.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

In October 2003 the *Ombudsperson for Gender Equality* was appointed and the Office of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality was formed.

In March 2004 the Government of the Republic of the Croatia established the *Office for Gender Equality* as the main coordinating body for implementation of the Gender Equality Law and all actions for the promotion and the protection of gender equality in the Republic of Croatia

In the Republic of Croatia there are nine commissions for Gender Equality at local level and several commissions at city level.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In the first National Policy for the Promotion of Equality Issues 1997-2000 particular attention was directed at improving the economic and political position of women. In the field of women and economy attention was given to the employment and self-employment of women, while in the area of participation of women in political life, greater attention was devoted to sensitising the public to the need for a greater presence of women in various forms of political decision-making. The national policy was directed towards abolishing stereotypes concerning gender differences during processes of education and the stereotype that *de jure* gender equality necessarily signifies *de facto* equality.

On the basis of the previous National Policy for the Promotion of Equality Issues and Outcome documents of the Beijing+5 Special Session of the UN, the Commission for Gender Equality was re-established and reshaped. The Commission prepared, in cooperation with NGOs and other actors of civil society, a new National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality from 2001 to 2005. The National Policy was approved in the Croatian Parliament on 4 December 2001 and therefore became a comprehensive document for the promotion and protection of women's human rights in the Republic of Croatia. It is important to emphasise the fact that the National Policy is a result of a consensus by government institutions and civil society.

The Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Policy has also been approved. It outlines specific tasks and obligations for various institutions with a precise timetable. The National Policy and the Action Plan have proved to be useful tools in identifying problem areas or legislative loopholes.

The July 2003 Law on Gender Equality protects and promotes gender equality as a fundamental value of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia, regulates the right to protection from discrimination on the basis of gender and creation of equal opportunities for women and men in political, economic, social, educational and all other areas of public life. It defines discrimination on the basis of gender as the dark side of equality in all its occurring forms – as a direct and indirect discrimination, and harassment and sexual harassment. It determines state mechanisms for achievement of equality and non-discrimination, as well as the obligation to introduce principals of gender equality (gender mainstreaming). Furthermore, it determines mechanisms for protection of the principles of gender equality.

This Law for the first time introduces prohibition of sexual harassment – defined as discrimination on the basis of gender – to Croatian legislation.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2001-2005, there are a significant number of programme tasks aimed at introducing gender mainstreaming as the cross-cutting issue in the public and private sectors.

Political will to introduce this principle is also expressed in the Law on Gender Equality whose Article 3 introduces gender mainstreaming as a legal obligation stipulating that: “ State bodies, legal entities vested with public powers and legal entities mostly in state's ownership or ownership of local and regional self-government units must at every stage of planning, adoption and implementation of a certain decision or action assess and evaluate effects of this decision or action on the status of women or men, in order to achieve *de facto* equality between women and men.»

Some steps towards the implementation of the gender mainstreaming principle have been made, such as introducing gender equality, as the highest value of the Republic of Croatia from which national interests emerge, into the Government National Security Strategy from 2002. By the Defence Act, also adopted in 2002, the Committee for Gender Equality was established within the Ministry of Defence with the purpose of realisation of equal treatment and status, as well as provision of equal approach and equal opportunities for the members of both genders. Also, the National Family Policy from 2002 stresses consolidation of family and professional obligations with emphasis on development of equal opportunities for men and women.

With the purpose of promoting gender equality principles and familiarizing state bodies' officials authorized for their implementation, an UNDP handbook, *Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: a Handbook*, has been translated and a seminar on the same issue was organized for the members of the Commission of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Gender Equality and the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, as well as the members of political parties.

CYPRUS¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *National Machinery for Women's Rights (NMWR)*: The NMWR was set up by the Council of Ministers in 1994 as a continuation of the Permanent Central Agency for Women's Rights, established in 1988. It includes four bodies² which operate under the auspices and chairmanship of the Minister of Justice. It advises the Council of Ministers on policies, programmes and legislation promoting women's rights, monitors, co-ordinates and evaluates the implementation of these programmes, carries out information, education and training programmes and supports and subsidises women's organisations. A large number of NGOs are represented in the NMWR. The budget of the Permanent Central Agency for Women's Rights in 1995, was 44 000 €.

In addition, each ministry has an official responsible for the promotion of women's rights, who is a member of the NMWR.

There are no regional or local bodies dealing with the promotion of equality of women.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *National Machinery for Women's Rights (NMWR)*: Since its creation in 1994, the budget of the NMWR has gradually been increased. In 2002, it received 315.000 €, while in 2003, it received 366.000 €. The annual budget of the NMWR is part of the budget of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order. The wages of the staff and the operational expenses are paid for by the general budget of the Ministry.

Efforts to secure additional financial and human resources will be continued in order to enable it to intensify the development of specific activities for women as well as gender mainstreaming throughout the government sector.

¹ Last update provided in July 2004.

² The Council for Women's Rights, the National Committee, the Inter-ministerial Committee and the General Secretariat.

CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

Since the Beijing Conference, new bodies and committees have been put in place, in the public sector, promoting gender equality within their specific sphere of competence. These include the:

- Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsperson);
- National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights;
- Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence;
- Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training;
- Investigation and Assessment of Work Committee under the Equal Pay legislation.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Based on the Beijing Platform for Action, the government has formulated its National Action Plan which, in concrete terms, covers the following areas:

- Law reform;
- Participation of women in political life;
- Participation of women in the labour market and reconciliation of working and family responsibilities;
- Violence against women;
- Trafficking and exploitation of women;
- Awareness-raising on women's issues;
- Women and peace;
- Sensitization and gender mainstreaming within the public sector;
- Strengthening of the national machinery.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The goal of gender mainstreaming has been incorporated in the new 5 Year National Development Plan (1999-2003) under the special chapter on Women and Development.

The Republic of Cyprus acknowledges that an important component of the new strategy of gender mainstreaming is to set up mechanisms that will allow gender issues to be integrated into key sectors of government, as well as the private sector and civil society. To this end, it has developed close collaboration between government departments and the *National Machinery for Women's Rights* (NMWR) on the one hand, and other agencies, academic institutions and NGOs on the other.

A consultancy visit by Professor Teresa Rees – a University of Cardiff Social Scientist, expert on Gender Mainstreaming – took place in June 2001 in order to assist the NMWR in the development of a framework for a project on gender mainstreaming in Cyprus. Based on the proposals of her report, the NMWR in collaboration with the British Council in Nicosia, organised a training programme on gender mainstreaming for the Gender Focal Points of the Ministries as well as an awareness raising session on gender mainstreaming for high-ranking officials (April 2002).

CZECH REPUBLIC¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

There was no special national institutional machinery responsible for promoting gender issues in the Czech Republic.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

None

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- The *Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs* is responsible for the overall coordination of all national efforts in support of equal opportunities for women and men. The coordinating function of this Ministry is administered by its European Integration and Foreign Relations Section, Gender Equality Office. The Office also serves as the secretariat of the Government Council on Equal Opportunities. There is no special state budget allocation for the promotion of equal opportunities and advancement of women. The necessary funds are provided from the budget allocations of individual ministries. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs thus finances the coordinating functions as well as the work of the of the Government Council on Equal Opportunities.
- The Government Resolution No. 456 of 9 May 2001 instructed each ministry to create a gender focal point function with effect from 1 January 2002
- The *Government Council on Equality between Women and Men* is an advisory body that was created by Government Resolution No.1033 of October 10, 2001 to make proposals and recommendations addressing equality between women and men as a general social problem. The Council has 23 members appointed for a term of four years, including 15 representatives of ministries (at the level of deputy minister), representatives of the civil society, social partners and independent experts. To facilitate coordination between the Council and local governments, the heads of the Regions will have a permanent guest status enabling them to attend Council sessions, make proposals and participate in the development of nationwide policies. The Council complements the existing system of Government advisory bodies created to address discrimination on specific grounds such as disability or national or social origin. Its decisions are published. The Council held its first session in April 2002.

¹ Last update provided in August 2004.

- The *Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* is part of the Government Human Rights Council. Its work is coordinated by the secretary of the *HRC*. It is a Government advisory body created to make proposals and recommendations concerning human rights legislation. The Council's *Committee* comprises representatives of NGOs, from the academic sphere and certain executive authorities. The work of the *Committee* is funded from the budget allocation of the Government Office.
- Permanent commission for family and equal opportunities was established in July 2002. The Commission works in the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic and deals with family problems, equal opportunities for women and men and discussion among the Parliaments of EU.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In April 1998, the Government adopted *Government Priorities and Policies for the Promotion of Equality between Men and Women* drafted by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. This action plan identifies seven priority areas and sets concrete tasks and deadlines for individual government authorities. The priorities are subject to annual review. The seven priority areas outlined in the action plan are:

1. To promote equality between women and men as a government policy;
2. To adopt legislation safeguarding equality between women and men and to raise legal awareness;
3. To ensure equal opportunities for women and men as regards access to economic activities;
4. To equalize the social situation of women and men caring for children and dependent family members;
5. To develop legislation and policies taking into account the reproductive functions and physical constitution of women;
6. To suppress violence against women;
7. To monitor and assess effectiveness of the application of the principle of equality between men and women.

Since January 2002, each ministry has a gender focal point with at least one staff member serving on a part-time basis.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The *Government Priorities and Policies for the Promotion of Equality between Men and Women* recognise that gender mainstreaming is one of the basic tools of the Czech Government's equal opportunities policy. According to paragraph 1.8 of this document, all public authorities must apply the equal opportunities principle at all stages of their decision-making and policy development process. For the time being, this tool is mostly underused due to a lack of knowledge of the principle and its application methods. Paragraph 1.10 of the *Government Priorities and Policies for the Promotion of Equality between Men and Women* required all members of the Government to submit to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, by the end of 2001, their policies and priorities in this area. The submitted documents generally reflected a very responsible approach.

DENMARK¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Equal Status Council*: First established in 1975, set up by law in 1978 and amended in 1988, this advisory body was attached to the Prime Minister's Office. Its members are representatives of women's organisations and social partners. Its objective is to promote equality in employment, to combat stereotypes and to launch pilot projects. It informs the relevant authorities of defects in laws and administrative practices, suggests informal measures, helps complainants, carries out research and studies and gives advice at international level. It also co-ordinates the equal rights policy between the ministries. In 1992, its resources amounted to DKK 4.5 million (605,385 €) and in 1996 to DKK 7.4 million (995,570 €).
- *The Committee on International Equality Affairs* follows the international equality work, with a view to proposing Danish initiatives in the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers and other relevant fora. From 1993 it acted as the Danish preparatory committee for the Beijing Conference until a specific governmental committee took over.
- There is a long tradition in Denmark that *Non-Governmental Organisations* take a very active part in the work of obtaining gender equality and combating discrimination and stereotypes. That is especially true for the National Council of Women in Denmark (umbrella organisation for about 50 organisations) and The Danish Women's Society. These NGOs are active participants in governmental delegations to international conferences and act as watchdogs of public initiatives and policies.

Gender research at the *Universities*: Gender research covers various specialised areas and is an umbrella for gender equality research, research on women, feminist research, research on men and masculinity and gay research. More than 300 researchers in Denmark are involved in gender research. The University of Copenhagen hosts the Coordination for Gender Studies in Denmark, which functions as the compilation centre vis-à-vis research environments, individual researchers and in relation to recruiting new researchers in this area.

- *The Danish Centre for Information on Women and Gender (KVINFO)*: KVINFO is a national information, documentation and cultural centre that communicates the results of women and gender research to a general public with broad interests. The Centre communicates knowledge on the impact of gender differences and strives to make women's knowledge, experience and expertise visible. The Centre is an independent institution under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs with its own bylaws and Board.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

Apart from the above-mentioned institutions there are a number of gender equality consultants in the municipalities and the local labour authorities as well as gender equality committees in organisations and enterprises.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

The Equal Status Council was closed down in 2000, when the Act on Gender Equality was passed by the Parliament, establishing *inter alia* a new framework for the national machinery.

The National Centre for Research and Information on Gender Equality was closed down by decision from the Parliament. A new institution The Danish Research Centre on Gender Equality was set up at Roskilde University in September 2002. The Centre performs research, development and communication focusing on gender equality.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- In July 1999, a *Minister for Gender Equality* was appointed with the responsibility to promote gender equality. The minister is responsible for the Government's overall activities in the field of gender equality and co-ordinates the equality work of other ministries. The mainstreaming strategy is in principle considered in relation to the Government as meaning that there are now 18 Ministers for Gender Equality - each within their field of competence responsible for integrating the gender and equality perspective in all policies and activities. The Minister for Gender Equality is responsible for implementing the mainstreaming strategy, not only in relation to other ministries but also other parts of the public administration. Parallel to the mainstreaming strategy, the Minister lays down rules and guidelines for gender equality work and initiates special measures to promote gender equality and equal opportunities. It is thus a matter of a dual approach. Each year the Minister draws up *a report and a perspective and action plan for gender equality for the Danish Parliament*. The yearly report is based on reports from local authorities and ministries and defines the government's priorities in equality work in the following year.
- The *Department for Gender Equality* was set up under the Minister for Gender Equality and is secretariat to the Minister. The Department is responsible for Government initiatives in the field of gender equality through co-ordination, development and implementation of the Government's policies and councils and advises the Minister and Parliament in matters concerning gender equality. The tasks include preparation of legislation and administrative rules concerning gender equality, co-ordination of gender equality measures initiated by public authorities as an element of the mainstreaming strategy, preparation of the annual report on gender equality for the Parliament, implementation of the Minister's perspective and action plan, secretarial assistance to the Gender Equality Board, monitoring of the development of a gender-balanced composition of certain committees and boards included in the Act on Gender Equality, representation in a number of international fora. Further information can be found at the web-site www.lige.dk
- *The Gender Equality Board* is composed of a chairperson who is a legally qualified judge and two members who have a law degree and who have knowledge about gender equality and the labour market. The Board deals with complaints about gender discrimination and the Board's decisions are final within the administrative system. The

decisions can be brought to the court of law. The Board also offers counselling and guidance to citizens, organisations, authorities and enterprises about the possibilities of bringing complaints concerning gender discrimination before the Board or other bodies. The Board publishes its decisions and submits an annual report. Any citizen may file a complaint with the Board. However members of trade unions can only do so if the trade union cannot or will not bring the case to the special machinery for settlement of industrial disputes. The Board can award compensation in the case of violation of the gender equality legislation and in special cases overrule a dismissal.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Governmental plans of action were introduced in Parliament in 1986 after the Nairobi Conference. Progress was checked by Parliament about every three years until the new Act on Gender Equality was adopted in 2000 requiring the Minister for Gender Equality to work out a status report to the Danish Parliament before the 1st of March *every year*. This report should contain a perspective plan and an action plan for the Equal Status Work. The Minister delivered her first report to the parliament on 2 March 2002

In 1996, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted a statement on the follow-up of Beijing to the National Assembly. The following issues are addressed in the statement:

- Integration of gender aspects into policy, planning and legislation; prepare guides for local governments;
- Education: Revise curricula, teacher training; provide vocational guidance, achieve equitable distribution of teachers at all levels, steer girls into technical and science fields;
- Employment: Eliminate segregated markets, legislation, incentives, reconciling work and family, collect statistics, equal pay, promote equal remuneration;
- Decision-making: Achieve balanced composition on public boards, councils;
- Violence: Focus on legislation, foreign women in Denmark, preventive campaigns.

In May 2000, the Parliament adopted the *Act on Gender Equality*, which establishes new institutional mechanisms on gender equality with the intention to promote and strengthen equal opportunities between women and men.

Section 5 of chapter 3 of the *Act on Gender Equality* requires that all Ministries, governmental institutions and government agencies draft reports on equality every second year. Section 5 a of chapter 3 in the above mentioned Act also stipulates an obligation for local councils and the county councils to draft reports on equality every second year.

In 2004 the Government's goals were described as "The Government wants to create equal opportunities for women and men. Its goal is for women and men to be seen as equals and have equal opportunities for making their choices. With this in mind, the government will strive to break down the barriers preventing individual women and men from leading the lives they want. The government wants respect for diversity and respect for the individual's personal choice. Gender equality is a crux of Denmark's democracy."

The priorities in the field of action were: Gender equality in management, politics and science, targeted integration seen in a gender perspective, violence against women, trafficking in women, young people and modern gender roles, labour market and

reconciliation of working and family life, gender mainstreaming, men and gender equality, an active and gender-equal old age.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Act on Gender Equality requires all public authorities to incorporate a gender and equality perspective in their portfolio and to promote gender equality in initiatives and regulation.

In 2000, the Minister for Gender Equality initiated a cross-ministerial development project on Gender Mainstreaming. Its aim is to integrate the gender and equality aspect in a professional and visible way into all activities, initiatives, in legislation and all work routines. A steering group was established in March 2001. In 2004 it consists of 20 members (9 women and 11 men) - all representatives from top management from the 18 ministries. The task of the group is to exchange experiences, disseminate results, and monitor the mainstreaming process and test new ideas. The Steering Group on Mainstreaming published a Plan of Action for Mainstreaming in July 2002 setting up the objectives for the work from 2002-2006. The action plan can be found at the website www.lige.dk in English under the publications menu.

A network of all the ministries' employees responsible for or co-ordinating the Gender Mainstreaming work of the Ministry has been established. This network is a professional forum where employees can get knowledge and exchange experiences.

ESTONIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

At the time of the Beijing Conference, there was no national machinery in Estonia. Estonian society remained unaware or had limited knowledge about the global strategies and achievements gained for the advancement of women before the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. In addition, there was a lack of data about the situation of women in Estonia as no gender research or special analysis had been carried out previously. The Beijing Conference and its preparatory process constituted an excellent opportunity to start work in this area.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

None.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

In March 2002, the *Draft Gender Equality Act* passed the first reading in parliament. On the 7th of April 2004 the Gender Equality Act was accepted by the parliament. The Gender Equality Act came into force on the 1st of May 2004. The law includes an overall prohibition of gender discrimination in all fields of public life and states that all public administration institutions are responsible for gender mainstreaming their policies and activities.

The process of establishing two new national institutions according to the Act is still going on. The institutions are the Gender Equality Commissioner (supervisory and complaints handling body) and the Council of Gender Equality (advisory body for the government).

- The *Working Group for Promoting Gender Equality* was established in February 2002. This group is headed by the Minister for Social Affairs and is composed of the representatives from different ministries. Its task is to develop a strategic development plan for eliminating the inequality of men and women and integrating gender equality into the action plans, programmes and projects of state institutions in different areas.
- *Bureau of Equality*: The Bureau was established in the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia in December 1996 and was enlarged into the Department of Gender Equality on the 1st of January 2004. The department operates in the field of authority of the Deputy Secretary General of Social Affairs. The staff of the Department consists of 3 civil servants, 2 employees working on a contractual basis, 2 officials will join the staff in the

¹ Last update provided in July 2004.

second half of the year 2004. Until now it is still the only special unit operating in the capacity of national machinery for promoting equality between women and men. In June 2000 a Law on the Government of the Republic was amended and the Ministry of Social Affairs was attributed three more functions: promoting the equality of men and women, coordination of these activities and preparation of the relevant draft laws. Since January 2002 the Bureau of Equality is a sub-unit of the Department for Foreign Relations and European Integration at the Ministry of Social Affairs. There is no special budget-line for equality and women's advancement in the national budget, although in 2001 a special sum of 175,000 EEK was allocated from the governmental budget for supporting women's networks. The staff of the Bureau consists of two highly-qualified officials, in 2002 two employees working on a contractual basis have been added.

- *Interministerial Committee*: As part of the follow-up activity to Beijing, this body was established in 1996 in order to deal with the social problems discussed at the UN World Conferences. This committee no longer exists.

The new staff of the Interministerial Committee for Promoting Gender Equality was established by the Government on the 27th of November 2003. The primary task of the committee is to develop a national action plan on gender equality by the 1st of August 2004.

Since 2003 there is a special budget-line of sum 400 000 EEK for supporting networking between women's NGOs and their activities in the field of gender equality in the national budget.

- *Association of Parliamentary Women*: This association was founded in 1998. It brings together female deputies from different parties. The association functions as an observer and supporter of gender-related legislation in parliament. It holds a meeting every month.
- *Round Table of Women*: The Round Table of Women, with representatives from different political parties, was established in 1998.
- *Women's Centre for Citizens' Training*: This political training centre was established in 1998 with the aim to guarantee greater participation of women in society. During 1998-1999, the centre initiated the establishment of 9 local women's round tables in Estonian counties. Since then the centre has been very active in promoting human rights, democratic values and gender equality.
- *Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre*: This centre has become an active promoter of gender equality in Estonia since its establishment in 1997. At the beginning the aim of this centre was to become a research centre open to the public as a library and an information centre. Besides fulfilling this aim the centre has arranged numerous seminars and conferences, supported and participated in many projects at both domestic and international level, run a public library in the field of gender-studies and feminist literature.

There were established 2 national NGO organisations (Estonian Women's Union of Co-operation and Estonian Women's Chain of Co-operation) in 2003 for representation of Estonia in the co-operation with European Women's Lobby. Both of the organisations are active in promoting gender equality.

In addition, a network of *focal points on gender equality* within the public administration has been set up since 1997, comprising civil service officials from several ministries.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Before the Beijing Conference, the National Report of Estonia "Estonian Women in a Changing Society" was published as a preparatory document for the Fourth World Conference. It functioned as an action plan also during the period after the Beijing Conference.

In addition, after the Beijing Conference in 1995, the Inter-ministerial Committee specified four immediate priorities for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action:

- The establishment and strengthening of the national machinery for equality at all levels of government;
- The review of Estonian legislation from an equality standards perspective;
- The availability of official gender-sensitive statistics;
- The improvement of women's position in the labour market and decision-making.

The Estonian "Action Plan for More and Better Jobs for Women" is an integral component of the country's follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. It is the product of the collaboration between Estonians and the International Labour Office (ILO). The plan focuses on the development of women's entrepreneurship in the regions most adversely affected by economic transition.

Estonia joined the European Union on 1st May 2004. The "National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis communautaire" was adopted by government in March 1998. The sixth chapter of the present "Government Activity Plan for 1998-2003" concentrates on social policy including equal opportunities for women and men. There has been achieved the compliance with the Acquis communautaire Estonian National Development Plan for the Implementation of the EU Structural Funds SPD 2004-2006 contains the gender aspect. Parliament has ratified the Joint Inclusion Memoranda and the Palermo protocol. Estonia has joined the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006).

According to the *Employment Action Plan of the Republic of Estonia*, in 2001-2003 new strategies and methods will be worked out to integrate gender equality into the areas of employment and occupational life. These include gender mainstreaming, reconciling work and family life, supporting women as entrepreneurs. On the basis of the Government's Employment Action Plan, strengthening of the policy to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men is one of the priority activities.

The Ministry of Social Affairs Strategic Action Plan 2000-2010 contains an objective to integrate the principle of gender equality into all national policies and invites the administration to engage in activities promoting dialogue and public awareness of gender issues as well as training of civil servants in different levels and sectors of government.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Estonia is elaborating a gender mainstreaming policy alongside the "traditional" gender equality policy.

The establishing of the Working Group for Promoting Gender Equality is an important step further in this direction as one of its tasks is integrating the principles of gender equality into

the action plans, programmes and projects of state institutions in different areas. Also the process of learning, training and co-operation continues including:

- training of gender equality specialists of different fields and levels;
- strengthening of state and non-governmental structures for gender mainstreaming;
- co-operation with Nordic and Baltic States is aimed for supporting gender mainstreaming into different policies and activities on local, regional and national level;
- implementation of international projects, supporting the networking between researchers, women's organisations and information dissemination

According to the Gender Equality Act, all states and local authorities and institutions are obliged to use a gender equality mainstreaming strategy. Training courses for the personnel of the ministries and NGOs have been held since 1997. Also, since 1997, focal points on gender equality issues have been established at the different ministries.

FINLAND¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Council for Equality*: Established in 1972, this body is attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Its members are representatives from political parties and its term is the same as that of the parliament. It serves as an active societal discussion forum in the field of equality policy and promoted gender equality by taking initiatives and issuing opinions.

Its objective is to promote and monitor the attainment of equality, to eliminate discrimination, to improve the status of women in employment and to promote equal pay. It proposes reforms to the authorities and labour market organisations, develops equality in the legislative and administrative fields, carries out research and combats violence and sexual harassment. It also follows international developments in the field of gender equality and introduces new topics and issues to public debate.

The Council for Equality may appoint subcommittees to which experts in the relevant field are appointed.

- Since 1981, the Council has appointed a *Subcommittee for Women's and Gender Studies*, which functions as an intersection between equality policy and research. It has been actively involved in improving the operational preconditions for women's studies and in promoting work on equality in universities. It supported the development of men's studies and functions as the editorial council for publications.
- Since 1988 a *Subcommittee on Men's Issues* exists. This Subcommittee has introduced debate, ordered reports and organised seminars in particular on, paternity, men in working life and more recently on immigrant men and violent men. The Subcommittee has also been active in launching the reform on family leave.
- From 1990 – 1998 the *Subcommittee on Violence* made suggestions for changes in legislation, new research and the improvement of statistics and service system. It was influential in making two well known studies: *Faith, Hope, Battering* which mapped the prevalence of men's violence to women and *The Price of Violence*.

In 1987 the Act on Equality Between Women and Men came into force. It aims to promote equality between women and men, prevent direct and indirect discrimination based on gender, improve the status of women particularly in working life, and facilitate the reconciliation of working life and family life for women and men. Furthermore, it prohibits discrimination in job advertisements and training vacancies, and gives those discriminated in working life a right to claim compensation. It also obliges the authorities to change such circumstances that prevent the achievement of equality, it requires that men and women

¹ Last update provided in July 2004.

shall be provided equal opportunities for education and occupational advancement and demands an even distribution of male and female members in state and municipal bodies. The Act does not apply to activities connected with religious practice nor does not authorise interfering in family matters or in people's private life.

The *Office of the Ombudsperson for Equality* was established with the enforcement of the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986) in 1987. The Ombudsperson for Equality monitors the compliance with the Equality Act and in particular compliance with the provisions prohibiting discrimination. The Ombudsperson provides advice and counselling free of charge. The cases handled are often related to recruitment, pregnancy, the use of family leave and wages. About 30% of the cases are brought by men and 70% by women. Trade organisation and other associations also consult the Ombudsperson for Equality. In 2003, the Ombudsperson for Equality made 115 written opinions on discrimination issues.

The tasks of the Ombudsperson for Equality also include promoting equality in particular in the workplace. In addition, the Ombudsperson's tasks include providing information on the Equality Act and its application as well as monitoring the progress of equality in different areas of the society.

If the Ombudsperson for Equality detects a failure to comply with the obligations in the Equality Act, he or she must try to prevent infringement of the rules by providing advice and counselling. The Ombudsperson can, if necessary, place a matter involving illegal action before the Equality Board.

Equality Board: In addition to the Ombudsperson for Equality, the Equality Act is monitored by the Equality Board. The Equality Board's Chairman and four of its members are appointed by the Government for three year periods. In addition to equality experts, its members include representatives from labour market organisations. On the initiative of the Ombudsperson or a central labour market organisation, the Board can prohibit illegal discriminatory action, and may impose a conditional fine in certain cases – this fine has been imposed only once. By virtue of the Equality Act, the Board can also, on request, issue opinions to courts of law in matters concerning compensation (a couple of opinions per year). Opinions issued by the Equality Board or the Ombudsperson for Equality are not binding for the courts.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

Within the state administration gender equality matters fall within the scope of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Those responsible for the practical implementation of equality are the Gender Equality Unit, the Ombudsperson for Equality and the Council for Equality. In Parliament the Employment and Equality Committee deals with equality issues.

?Indeed, until the organisational reform in 2001, a coordinator for women's studies was working in the Office of the Ombudsperson for Equality.

Amendment to the Act on Equality: The Act on Equality between Women and Men (Equality Act) has been revised several times since its enforcement in 1987. The latest more extensive revision of the Act was in 1995. The present legislative proposal aims at an overall amendment of the Equality Act based on revisions required by EU legislation, judgements of the European Court of Justice, the equality aspirations of the Government Programme of Prime Minister Vanhanen's Government, amendments to legislation other than the Equality

Act as well as measures to improve the enforcement and monitoring of the Act itself. The development of equality legislation in other Nordic countries has also been considered when drafting this legislative proposal.

The revision of the Act also enforces the amendments to the Directive for Equality in working life (2002/73/EC). The regulations in the Constitution of Finland on equality in societal activities and working life that came into effect after the latest amendments to the Equality Act have also been considered when drafting the present legislative proposal.

The proposed amendments extend the scope of application of the Equality Act to modes of work related to employment relationships as well as to personnel leasing.

Provisions on the general duty of authorities and institutions exercising official authority to promote equality are specified. The scope of application of the quota provision is extended to institutions for cooperation between municipalities and institutions exercising official authority.

The provisions concerning equality planning at workplaces are specified. It is proposed that the Equality Act should include definitions on direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender. It is also proposed that sexual harassment and harassment on the grounds of gender are defined as illicit discrimination.

The Government proposal on revising the Equality Act will be given to the Parliament for approval in autumn 2004 and the Act should come into force as from the beginning of the year 2005.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Inter-ministerial Working Party*: After the Beijing Conference, the first ever inter-ministerial body on equality issues was set up. It was created for the follow-up of the Beijing Conference. It includes representatives from all ministries. In 1999, its last report was submitted.
- The *Gender Equality Unit* started its work on 1 May 2001. It prepares the government's gender equality policy. The duties of the Unit include drafting laws, and preparing and developing the Government's equality policy in collaboration with the ministries. The Unit co-ordinates international gender equality issues associated with the European Union, the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

In 2003, the Council for Equality created the *Subcommittee on Women's and Gender studies* to promote equality by, for example, encouraging municipalities to include a gender perspective in their budgets and to assess gender effects. A *Subcommittee on Men's Issues and the Media* focuses on boys and young men.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

THE NATIONAL ACTION PLANS OF FINNISH GOVERNMENTS (1995-2003)

In 1995-2003 the governments continued to include equality issues in their government programs. During this period three out of the four governments committed themselves to formulating a specific Equality Action Plan.

A special *Plan of Action for the Promotion of Gender Equality* (1997) was drawn up to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The objectives set out in this Plan took the form of projects (96 in total) and tasks. The most important outcome of the Plan was the five-year cross-sectoral project for the prevention of violence against women including revision of the legislation., Research, statistics, education and services were developed.

Other significant achievements were the increased support for women entrepreneurs, gender mainstreaming within the administration and strengthening the equality objectives in the National Action Plan for Employment (NAP). The project group estimated that the Equality Action Plan increased the visibility and impact of equality issues.

THE GOVERNMENT'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY (2003-2007)

Finland drafted a National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the years 2003-2007. All ministries participated in drafting and implementing the plan. The Gender Equality Unit coordinates this work. The Action Plan includes many of the tasks of the Beijing declaration but is also implementing tasks referred to in the Government Programme and the Government Strategy Document. The Action Plan includes programmes, legislative amendments and other measures to promote gender equality to be carried out during this parliamentary period. Although there is no specific budget for the Action Plan the measures are all funded individually by each ministry. . There will be a follow-up group and report on the Action Plan.

The work on the Government's Action Plan for Gender Equality is currently in progress. Activities include:

- mapping the possibilities for preparing a pay equity programme for finalisation by the government and the labour market organisations;
- increasing women's participation in the boards of enterprises fully or partly owned by the government;
- measures for improving the reconciliation of work and family lives include continuing the information campaign on the possibilities open to fathers to use family leave;
- developing legislation and changing attitudes towards children in a more positive direction;
- One task group is looking at ways of adjusting the cost of parental leave incurred by employers and another is trying to find ways to support female entrepreneurs;
- programmes for the prevention of violence against women and children and for preventing trafficking and measures to improve multi-professional co-operation in this field;
- setting up an information portal for women's studies, including a search tool for experts, articles on thematic areas etc., mapping of possibilities for improving coordination and documentation.

As a part of the follow-up of the Government's Action Plan for Gender Equality, its programmes and measures will be evaluated from a men and gender equality -perspective.

The Action Plan also includes measures for gender mainstreaming.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The basis for gender mainstreaming is provided by the fundamental rights in the Constitution Act as laid down by the Equality Act. Thus, the general obligation of the public authorities to promote gender equality has been integrated into legislation. Since 2004 the guidelines for making a government proposal for a new law have included a section mentioning that a gender impact assessment should be made while preparing the laws.

Gender equality and mainstreaming are well represented in the current Government programme. The programme states that the promotion of gender equality is the task of all government ministries and that gender mainstreaming will be integrated into the whole of state administration. Methods of gender impact assessment will be developed and the assessment will be integrated into legislation and preparation of the state budget. Also the knowledge in gender equality issues will be increased in the state administration.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is carrying out a pilot project in mainstreaming. The purpose of this project is to develop methods for promoting equality in state administration. The mainstreaming model is tested and revised on the basis of the experiences gained in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health with a view to developing a general model suitable for the whole state administration. The model will be extended to the other parts of the government as from 2004.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has had mainstreaming guidelines since June 2002.

The guidelines are applied to:

- gender impact assessment in law drafting. The results of the assessment and how they are taken into account in law drafting are reported in the drafting documents and included in the commentary to the bill. If it is assessed that the bill does not have impact on the status of women and men, that is mentioned in the commentary;
- taking into account of the objectives of gender equality promotion in other projects;
- promotion of gender equality in personnel policy;
- the target agreements of the Ministry and the agencies and institutions under it.

In gender impact assessment or mainstreaming in general, attention is paid to the impact of a legislative project on women's and men's:

1. financial status;
2. opportunities to fulfil their parental responsibilities and to reconcile work and family life;
3. education and training, and professional development;
4. job opportunities, employment and unemployment, quality of work, professional and career development;
5. opportunities to have influence and participate in society;
6. health and ill-health and the need for related services;
7. security and threat of violence;
8. safeguarding their social inclusion;
9. time use, leisure interests and need for recreation and
10. other factors of relevance to the implementation of gender equality.

It is proposed to include an obligation on gender impact assessment in the Equality Act in the context of its current reform. Mainstreaming is achieved through training at the highest level. It is stated in the government programme that awareness of gender equality issues should be improved.

FRANCE¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Urban Affairs:* As from 1993, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Urban Affairs took over the duties previously assigned to the State Secretary for Women's Rights. It thus became responsible for promoting any measures aimed at improving women's rights, encouraging the access of women to various positions of responsibility in French society and eliminating any forms of discrimination against women.
- *Department for Women's Rights:* This administrative entity comprises a central unit and a network of regional delegates and department representatives. In 1995, the department was placed under the authority of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Urban Affairs. Its aims were to ensure respect for women's rights and to guarantee equality in all fields. It introduced special measures for women and set up pilot projects relating to employment or the recognition of women's specific rights. The department was allocated public funding amounting to 22 242 312 € in 1990, 23 873 516 € in 1991 and 22 730 148 € in 1992. For the record, the first governmental body in France with responsibility for women's rights was set up in 1974.
- *Interministerial Committee for Women's Rights:* Set up in 1982, this committee includes all members of the government and is responsible for ensuring co-ordination between the different ministries in matters concerning equal opportunities for women and men.
- *National Council for Equality between Women and Men in the Workplace:* This council was set up under Act No. 83-635 of 13 July 1983 to encourage trade unions, employers' organisations, specialists in the field and public authorities to take part in a wide-ranging discussion on equality in the workplace. Its purpose is threefold: to monitor the application of provisions on equality in the workplace, to carry out studies and research and make proposals to improve equality in the workplace and to give its opinion on legislation concerning women's employment and on any changes in labour law that may have an impact on equality in the working environment.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *State Secretariat for Women's Rights and Vocational Training*: This secretariat was set up in November 1998, with Ms Nicole Pery being appointed State Secretary for Women's Rights and Vocational Training.
- *Ministry for Parity and Workplace equality*: This ministry was set up in 2004: Mrs Nicole Ameline, Deputy Minister responsible for parity and workplace equality under the Minister of Social Affairs since 2002, is now a full minister. This is a clear indication of the special importance which the French government intends to attach to equality policies.
- *Department for Women's Rights*: On 8 March 2000, the department for women's rights became the *Department for Women's Rights and Equality*. This change of name plays an important role in the acknowledgement of equality between women and men as a society project and in promoting a global approach for equality. Before this name change, other changes were already made to the old department for women's rights. It had been placed under the authority of the State Secretary for Women's Rights and Vocational Training, acting on behalf of the Minister for Employment and Solidarity. The department's activities have received funding amounting to 12 958 166 € in 1995, 12 775 228 € in 1996, 12 003 836 € in 1997, 10 987 000 € in 1998 and 12 267 572 € in 1999. 15 244 902 € in 2000, 16 342 535 € in 2001, 17 531 600 € in 2002. 18 000 000 € in 2003, 17 000 000 € in 2004.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Parity Observatory*: The observatory was set up in 1995 and placed under the authority of the Prime Minister. It is chaired by the Prime Minister, who may delegate this duty to the Minister for Women's Rights. The observatory's members are selected on account of their competence and experience and a general rapporteur is appointed by decree of the President of the Republic on a proposal from the Prime Minister and the Minister for Women's Rights. It is responsible for identifying existing trends (its duties include "collecting data and commissioning and conducting analyses, studies and research on the situation of women at national and international level"), but also has an advisory function (assisting "public authorities and leading figures from the political, economic and social fields in their decisions" and making "any recommendations and proposals to amend laws or regulations").
- *Two parliamentary delegations on women's rights and equal opportunities for women and men*: These delegations were set up under Act No. 99-585 of 12 July 1999 in both chambers of the French parliament (one in the National Assembly and one in the Senate). Their tasks include informing the two chambers about the implications of government policy for women's rights and equal opportunities for women and men, monitoring the implementation of legislation and drawing up an annual activity report containing recommendations, etc.
- *National Council on Sex Information, Birth Control and Family Education (CSIS)*: The CSIS was attached to the Department for Women's Rights in 1996. This consultative body, now under the joint authority of the ministers responsible for women's rights, family affairs and health, is divided into two assemblies: one for associations and the

other for government departments and specialists in the field. It suggests measures to be taken by the public authorities with a view to:

- Providing more information for young people and adults on matters such as family and sex education, birth control, adoption and couples' responsibilities;
 - Promoting sex education for young people, with due regard to parents' rights and responsibilities;
 - Supporting and promoting basic and further training initiatives for educators specialising in these fields.
- *Delegation on women's rights and equal opportunities for women and men.* This delegation was set up at the Social and Economic Council on February 29, 2000.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In 1999, the State Secretary for Women's Rights submitted a national action programme to the Council of Ministers. The programme was drawn up in accordance with the recommendations of the Beijing Conference and focused on a number of themes: Employment, equality in the workplace and parity, social advancement and reconciliation of family and working life.

The action programme was issued to all the relevant ministers, who were asked to indicate their priorities for action in the equality field.

The new approach to equality issues, initiated by the Minister for parity and workplace equality and implemented by the Women's rights and equality department, is reflected in the implementation of a pluri-annual methodology, which is integrated and global as well as partner-based and inter-ministerial. It is applied in four main spheres of action:

- political and social parity: for the sharing of responsibility between women and men;
- workplace equality: for a greater contribution from women to the development of the economy and equal job opportunities;
- respect for human dignity: to reinforce equality in terms of rights, autonomy and citizenship;
- time management: for a new balance of social roles between women and men.

The success of these activities depends on the introduction of a comprehensive equal opportunities policy in which positive action is required of all policy-makers and society as a whole is involved.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In line with the strategy initiated in Beijing in 1995, French policies are developing both specific measures aimed at certain categories of women to curb the situations of inequality observed and a cross-sectoral policy geared to taking the respective situations of women and men into account when devising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating initiatives (gender mainstreaming).

To gain a clearer picture of the respective situation of men and women, work has begun on adapting the statistics system used by the State.

Some 30 partnership agreements have been signed between the Ministry responsible for women's rights and other authorities and state-supervised bodies, focusing on quantified objectives for the advancement of women in the policies concerned: the "Inter-ministerial convention for the promotion of equal opportunities between girls and boys and women and men in the education system", a five-year framework agreement with the Agency for vocational training for adults (AFPA) aimed at doubling the number of women in job qualification training, setting up of a network of equality referral agents in the civil service etc.

A new explanatory appendix to the state budget has been introduced: the "Yellow paper on women's rights and equality" sets out the State's financial effort and an analysis of initiatives undertaken in these fields by different ministries (eight for the 2001 finance bill, fifteen for 2003).

Furthermore, the introduction of planning by objectives for equality policy in the coming years will help to consolidate the gender budgeting approach. From 2006 onwards, the structure of the French budget will be changed and the finance bills submitted to Parliament each year will be organised into budget programmes setting objectives and results to be attained for each of the public policies which the Government wishes to pursue.

In this context, the Ministry for Parity and Workplace equality has provided for a programme on equality between women and men that would make it possible to develop the four fundamental objectives of national policy:

- parity and access to responsibilities;
- workplace equality;
- access to rights and respect for human dignity;
- time management.

By convening the "Equality conference" in March 2003, Mrs Nicole Ameline gave fresh impetus to the cross-sectoral approach promoting equality between women and men, hinging on three supports: the Charter for equality between women and men, a National council for equality, and a network of equality players.

- The *Charter for equality between women and men* was submitted to the French Prime Minister on 8 March 2004 on International Women's day. It is a contractual document, drawn up in collaboration with the different groups working to promote equality between women and men at national and local level and placing all the initiatives and commitments in this area on a formal footing. It will form something of an agenda and a road-map for all the players signing up to it: the State, which must set an example to follow, as well as local authorities, both sides of industry, chambers of commerce, the entire business community and the whole of civil society. Each of the players has carefully worked out proposals for initiatives that they will be committed to carrying out in the next three years to build a more equal society. Five main thrusts of progress are defined:
 - political parity and access to decision-making;
 - equality in the workplace;
 - respect for human dignity;
 - time management;
 - European and international solidarity.

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- A *National council for equality between women and men* is proposed, with a view to monitoring and guiding the new partnership arrangement set in motion by the Charter for equality. To this end, the Council will keep itself informed of all equality issues. It will bring together, in two specific groups (one dealing with workplace equality and the other with women's rights), three advisory committees, namely the National Council for Equality between Women and Men in the Workplace, the National Council on Sex Information, Birth Control and Family Education, and the Commission against Violence;
 - A *network of women under the banner "Contemporaines"* will be created as a first step towards the Parity network, with the ultimate aim of bringing together all players in the equality sphere.

GEORGIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

At the time of the Beijing Conference, there was no national machinery in Georgia. Georgian society had little awareness of the global strategies and achievements gained for the advancement of women. No serious gender research and analysis had been carried out.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

None.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *State Commission on the Elaboration of State Policy for the Advancement of Women:* This commission was created by presidential Decree from February 1998 and attached to the State Chancellery. It receives instructions from the President of Georgia. It is headed by the Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council on Human Rights Issues and its 27 members are representatives from Parliament, the State Chancellery, involved ministries, NGOs and the media. The activities of the commission are directed at the implementation of the recommendations of the Beijing Conference. The commission was given responsibility for elaborating State policy and strategy on the support and improvement of women's conditions in Georgia and for working out a plan of action. Financial difficulties do not allow the State to provide the commission with a budget. The commission received financial support through the UNDP project "Gender in Development" (budget: 200 000 USD). However, the financial crisis in Georgia unfortunately influences the current activities of the State Commission. In the light of the economic situation the State Commission lack financial means, which creates a difficulty in achieving its main goals. There is enough qualified personnel available.
- *Gender Groups:* Informal gender groups are operating within the ministries concerned.

¹ Based on: Reply to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming and update provided in 2002.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The National Plan of Action was elaborated by the State Commission on the Elaboration of State Policy for the Advancement of Women and approved by the President of Georgia by Order N°308 in June 1998. Out of the 12 priorities of the Beijing Platform for Action, 7 were chosen:

- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
- Women in power and decision-making;
- Women and the economy;
- Women and poverty;
- Women and armed conflict;
- Women and health
- Human rights of women.

In addition to the *National Action Plan*, *National Plans for Health protection and employment* were developed, which contain special measures for the protection of women's health and their employment.

Much work was carried out on issues relating to achieving gender equality from 1998 to 2000. In 1999, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered the initial report of Georgia on the implementation of "the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women". The Committee positively assessed the work carried out.

At the same time, the Committee gave many very useful recommendations to the Government of Georgia. Based on these recommendations, the *State Commission on the Elaboration of State Policy for the Advancement of Women* elaborated the draft Order of the President of Georgia *On Strengthening the Protection of Human Rights of Women in Georgia*, which was approved on 28 August 1999. By this Order, the Commission was instructed to work out the *Plan on Combating Violence against Women*. This plan was drafted and on 25 February 2000, the President of Georgia approved the *Order on approving the Plan on Combating Violence against Women (2000-2002)*. The two orders have created important legislative bases for promoting and implementing the *Action Plan for Improving Women's Condition*.

On the proposal of the *Commission*, the President of Georgia (by Order No. 1406 of 29 December 2000) took the decision to prolong the term of implementation of the Action Plan until 2005. Combating violence against women can be considered as the eighth priority.

(Also see 3)

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Gender mainstreaming is put into practice by awareness-raising on gender issues as well as training of specialists in different fields and at different levels. Training courses on gender equality issues were held in different NGOs, the Ombudsperson's Office, the respective ministries and in the Parliamentary Women's Club.

Training on gender equality issues has been carried out under the project "Mainstreaming Gender Equality into the Government Institutions in Georgia" financed by SIDA (Sweden). This Project was implemented in cooperation with the Service on Human Rights Issues of the National Security Council of Georgia and the Commission. Training on gender issues was held in the police headquarters of 24 districts of Georgia. Moreover, training on the work of the Commission has been disseminated throughout the country in 52 districts of Georgia. However, the number of people attending these sessions was limited.

The President of Georgia issued a Decree "About the Measures on Strengthening the Protection of Human Rights of Women in Georgia" (No. 511) in August 1999. The Decree contains important provisions aiming at the establishment of gender equality in Georgia. The provisions are aimed at the ministries, parliament and other public bodies.

Unfortunately, the Commission lacks methods to implement its activities. Occasionally there is a lack of follow-up to the Commission's decisions.

GERMANY¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth*²: The objective of the women's sector within the Ministry is to ensure respect for equal treatment by increasing equal opportunities for women, eliminating discrimination, developing a comprehensive and effective policy, influencing government decisions and ensuring protection of expectant and nursing mothers. The Ministry as a whole employs more than 500 people. Besides the Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, nearly all Federal Ministries have set up sections that are particularly concerned with women's issues.
- *Women's Policy Department*: The Women's Policy Department first appeared in 1986. Its objective is to ensure equal treatment by increasing equal opportunities for women, eliminating discrimination, setting up a framework to guarantee women's equal participation in politics and gainful work as well as the reconciliation of work and family life.
- *Central equality units at "Länder" level*: These units are either independent Ministries or attached to the department of the Minister President or incorporated into another ministry. Their objective is the promotion of equality at Länder level. They initiate and propose draft laws, define the measures to be taken by the specific government as regards women's policies and they co-ordinate co-operation between ministries in the area of women's issues, often with the support of an Inter-ministerial Committee dealing with women's policy.
- The Conference of Ministers and Senators of the Länder for Equal Opportunities and Women (GFMK) meets annually with a different chair person each time. The Federal Government is represented as a standing guest.
- *Equality units at local level*: Having been set up since 1982, these 1200 bodies vary considerably from one Land to another. Their objective is to promote equality at local level. The advantage of such local institutions is that they are close to everyday aspects of difficulties or discrimination encountered by women.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

² Between 1995 and 1998, the ministry had access to approx. 10 225 838 € for equal opportunities programmes. The budget was to be increased to 10 737 130€ in 1999.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Women's Policy Department:* The department was renamed Equality (Gleichstellung) Department in 1998. Its task is to eliminate discrimination against women in all political and social fields, to set up a framework to guarantee women's equal participation in politics and gainful employment as well as to reconcile work and family life.
- *Equality units at local level:* In 2002, the number of local units exceeds 1,900.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Commissioners for Women's Affairs:* Full-time commissioners for women's affairs of the supreme federal authorities and in all employment offices have been appointed.
- *Department of Family Affairs:* One main focus of the federal government in this legislative period is the reconciliation of work and family life. Therefore, the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, in partnership with the Bertelsmann foundation, launched the "Alliance for the Family" in summer 2003, in which the government, social partners, NGOs and other important stakeholders work together on a sustainable policy in favour of the family in order to get women into work. This new co-operation between politicians, business and trade unions is based on the consensus that a higher birth rate and a higher labour market participation by women are needed to cope with the challenges of the demographic change and international competitiveness.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The National Strategy for the implementation of the Platform for Action was set up in 1997 by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. It focuses on the following objectives:

- Equal access of women to decision-making positions at all levels of society;
- Improvement of women's situation in the economy and on the labour market;
- Human rights and the elimination of violence against women and girls.

In June 1999, the programme "Women and Work" was launched, which aims at:

- Improving training opportunities for young women, particularly in the future-oriented occupations associated with the information age;
- Expanding the employment and advancement opportunities of women;
- Eliminating discrimination against women setting-up in business;
- Promoting the reconcilability of family and career and the integration of men into family work;
- Counteracting income and wage discrimination against women, and
- Increasing the percentage of women in research and teaching.

Four Federal Länder Governments and NGOs have formulated individual demands of the Platform for Action for themselves. Saxony passed a cabinet resolution. The 6th Conference of Ministers and Senators for Equal Opportunities and Women (GFMK) adopted a 24-point catalogue (the demands of these bodies are annexed to the National Strategy).

In autumn 1999, a new action plan to combat violence against women was launched. It focuses on the following aims:

- prevention by projects and individual measures;
- protection of women against violence by legislative measures;
- co-operation between state institutions and non-governmental assistance services;
- nation-wide networking of assistance services;
- working with offenders, training for professionals and international co-operations.

All of the measures listed in the action plan to combat violence against women have been started and most of them have been successfully completed or implemented. The action plan will be further developed in the near future.

Program of Action 2015

In the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the international community has made a commitment to halve the proportion of people in extreme poverty worldwide by 2015. With its Program of Action 2015, the German government contributes towards achieving that goal. The Program of Action underlines that one of the causes of poverty is, not least, a lack of gender equality. All activities are therefore designed in such a way that women's and men's differing needs are taken into account on an equal basis. The Program contains a separate chapter on the targeted empowerment of women: activities are intended to help achieve equal access to basic education for women and girls and to fight the trafficking in women and children. Support is to be given to women's networks with a view to improving women's influence on political processes, for instance the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process.

Agreement to promote the equal opportunities of women and men in private industry

On 2 July 2001 the Federal Government and the central associations of German business reached an agreement on the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men in private industry. This agreement was an important step towards gender equality in business and industry. For the first time the central associations of German business have committed themselves to support active policy on equality.

The main objectives of this agreement are the lasting improvement of prospects and chances of training and career for women and the compatibility of working and family life for women and men by intra-company incentive measures. This is meant to increase the percentage of women on the labour market, even in those areas where they have been under-represented so far, especially also in leading positions and in jobs with future potential.

Pursuant to this agreement the progress to be stated within the enterprises shall be examined regularly and shall be reported in the balance sheet every two years. In January 2004 the high level working group with equal representation accompanying this agreement has submitted a first report on its implementation.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The new Federal Government expressly emphasises the mainstreaming function of women's policy. The realisation of the *gender mainstreaming approach* has been underway since autumn 1998. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth promotes the implementation of the gender mainstreaming approach in all political sectors of the Federal Government.

With its cabinet decision of 23 June 1999 the Federal Government, based on the national objective enshrined in Article 3 para 2 sentence 2 of the Basic Law, recognised the equality of women and men as a consistent principle guiding its governance and decided to promote this endeavour by means of the gender mainstreaming strategy. Adopted on 26 July 2000 subsequent to this decision, section 2 of the Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries requires all departments to observe this approach in all political, normative and administrative measures of the Federal Government. Section 2 of the Federal Equality Act also stipulates the gender mainstreaming principle.

Under the auspices of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth an interministerial working group at management level was established in May 2000 to develop a catalogue of criteria for giving greater consideration to gender-related issues in the regular work and programme planning of the Federal Government. In July 2000, Gender Mainstreaming was made part of the Government's Programme *Modern State - Modern Administration*.

According to the new standing orders for the Federal Government, all departments are obliged to apply the gender mainstreaming approach. During this parliamentary term, all the departments organise pilot schemes and train their employees so they will be qualified to use the gender mainstreaming approach in their daily work.

At the end of 2003, the pilot project phase was almost completed. The lessons learned, experiences and results were summarised in an electronic manual, the so-called "Knowledge net - Gender Mainstreaming for the Federal Administration" and published on the internet at www.gender-mainstreaming.net.

Results and instruments from the pilot projects are already available and have been presented by the individual ministries to the IMA for example: Federal Ministry of the Environment (Gender Impact Assessment for Specialised Tasks of the Ministry), Federal Ministry of Health and Social Security (Gender mainstreaming in the allowance field - pilot project on professional rehabilitation), Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Guidance on department-commissioned research; legislative projects manual), Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (Gender mainstreaming in public relations - pilot project economic report 2001), Federal Ministry of the Interior (further training event for that Ministry's heads of division on the proper implementation of gender mainstreaming).

The instruments developed to suit the needs of the individual ministries were translated into a version which could be used, as far as possible, by all; so far a working aid for the preparation of legal provisions, ministry research and public relations work has been produced.

The working aid entitled "Gender mainstreaming in the preparation of legislation" which had been urgently requested by the divisions responsible for legislation, was initially accepted by the IMA GM as a prototype in the year 2002 and then tested for one year. This aid enables

the divisions responsible for legislation, superiors and other ministries involved in the consultations to recognise - by answering three short questions (so-called relevance testing) whether the legislative procedure in question is likely to have an equal-rights policy impact at all. If this turns out to be the case, the working aid will support the elaboration of alliances between the technical and the equal-rights policy objectives. At the end of the evaluation, it was revised taking into consideration the experiences and findings compiled in the various ministries. The version currently available was transmitted in February 2004, via the State Secretaries' Committee, to the ministries for application. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth will be reporting again on its introduction and application in practice at the Interministerial Working Group in winter 2004/2005.

The working aids: "Ministry Research" and "Public Relations Work" are currently being tested in the ministries to determine their applicability in practice. The ministry with the main responsibility in each case (the Federal Ministry for Education and Research for the working aid on ministerial research and the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government for the public relations checklist) will report back to the Interministerial Working Group when the trials have been completed.

In October 2003 the Gender Competence Centre at the Humboldt University was founded; it is sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. It works as an independent research and consulting facility whose activities are expected to support, in particular, the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Federal Government.

On International Women's Day, on 8th March 2004, the newest version of the internet presentation of the Federal Government on Gender Mainstreaming (www.gender-mainstreaming.net) has gone online. Along with the latest news, a gender quiz and information on gender mainstreaming at federal, Land, municipal and international level, the Information Network for the Federal Administration and a newsletter on subscription, have been included.

GREECE¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Deputy Minister of Presidency*: Appointed in 1989 and cancelled in the same year, this function was reinstated in 1993. The Deputy Minister is responsible for gender equality matters.
- *General Secretariat for Equality between women and men*: This advisory body was set up in 1985 by Decree and replaced the Office of the Special Adviser to the Prime Minister (1982). It is an independent department attached to the Prime Minister's Office. Its objective is to promote and ensure equal rights. It prepares and makes recommendations, supervises the implementation of these measures, lists and analyses political, social, institutional and economic factors and collects and disseminates information. The General Secretariat is supervised by the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation. The Secretariat's budget is part of the national budget. In 1991, it was granted 1 130 848 €, in 1994 1 648 815 €, in 1999, 1 763 022 €, in 2000, 1 010 271 €, in 2001, 1 406 908 € and in 2002, 2 156 300 €.
- *Council for Equality*: This consultative body was established in 1989 by ministerial decision. It is composed of independent experts. Its objective is to ensure equality in the public service.
- *Equality Offices*: Since 1984, Equality Offices have been in operation at the Ministry of Labour and at every Labour Inspection of the country. Since 1990, efforts have been made to organise and operate Equality Offices at all ministries, state organisations and public services. Their objective is to carry out continuous studies on the legislation and case-law concerning equality and to have regular contact with other competent services to exchange gender related information. The Equality Offices have problems in operation, except those at the Ministries of Labour and Justice.
- *Research Centre on Gender Issues*: This centre was established in 1989 and began operating in 1994. It is supervised by the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation and has branches in Thessaloniki and Patras. Its aim is to promote equal opportunities in employment and in economic development as well as to disseminate and apply the policy on equal opportunities for women and men. It conducts scientific research and organises vocational training programmes for women, organises positive action plans, counsels women in search of employment, supports the integration of women into the labour market, provides information, co-operates with regional, national and international organisations etc., organises conferences and meetings and raises public awareness on gender issues. In co-operation with the General Secretariat on Equality, it has created the Women's Information Unit on Employment and Vocational Training (see below), the Documentation Unit on Employment and Vocational Training

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

for Women (see below), a network of centres for the creative education of children and a network for the development of women's entrepreneurship. The creation of further bodies and networks is planned for. There are branches in Thessaloniki; Patras, Irakeion and Volos. It is financed from the budget of the General Secretariat for Equality.

- *Women's Information Unit on Employment and Vocational Training:* This body was set up in 1994 at the Research Centre on Gender Issues. Its main objectives are the promotion of equal opportunities as regards employment, the promotion of women's entrepreneurship and the enhancement of women's participation in decision-making in the country's economic life. It provides women with information and gives advice on employment issues.
- *Documentation Unit on Employment and Vocational Training for Women:* A comprehensive information system on employment and vocational training for women has been operating in the documentation unit at the Research Centre on Gender Issues since 1994. It includes the following sub-systems: Labour market, vocational training and bibliography.
- *Regional/Prefectural Organisations:* In 1983, Prefectural Equality Committees and Prefectural Equality Offices were established by virtue of a circular of the Ministry of the Interior. The Equality Offices were created to disseminate information to the citizens in the regions. By Presidential Decree in 1989, both institutions were set up by law and the Equality Offices renamed "Equality Departments". The Equality Committees were abolished in 1992. Due to the 1994 Law on the "establishment of prefectural administration", the Equality Departments were abolished, but they continued their work until the re-organisation of the Prefectural Administration was completed.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Deputy Minister of Presidency:* The office of the Deputy Minister was abandoned in 1996.
- *General Secretariat for Equality between women and men:* The General Secretariat's new organisational chart is nearing completion. It provides for a new structure, creates directorates and independent sections² and includes the clear formulation of responsibilities for a more effective operation of its services. A National Consultative Committee on Equality as well as a Standing Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities is to be set up by the General Secretariat.
- *Council for Equality:* The Council was abolished in 1996.
- *Regional/Prefectural Organisations:* In 1998, Regional Equality Centres went into operation in each region, in order to promote and implement gender equality in the region. They are made up of one representative from the General Secretariat for Equality, one representative from the General Secretariat of the Region and one representative from every prefecture in the region. The establishment of Prefectural

² Public Information Office, Legal Section, Social Programmes Section, Publications and Events Section, International Relations Section, Battered Women's Centre, Library of the General Secretariat for Equality, Research Centre on Gender Issues (see above).

Equality Committees with representatives from state, local mass and women's organisations is now under the competence of each Prefect.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

The legislative framework that is in effect today in Greece with regard to gender equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, was established with the Constitution of 1975, which stated that Greek men and women are equal in front of the law and have equal rights and obligations.

Starting from this constitutional order, important laws concerning family, education, equality in work relations and social security were passed. As far as Greek courts and the majority of their decisions are concerned, it is proved that judicial protection is granted according to national legislation as well as the community and international law on gender equality.

A. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY

Law 2839/2000 established thirteen (13) **Regional Committees for Equality**, operating in the capital cities of the Regions of the country.

The Regional Committees for Equality are constituted by decision of the Secretary General of the Region and consist of:

- the Secretary General of the Region, as President ;
- two representatives of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality of the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization ;
- one representative of the Association of the Prefectural Local Authorities of Greece ;
- one representative of the Central Association of Municipalities and Communities of Greece.

The representatives of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the members indicated by the Association of the Prefectural Local Authorities and by the Central Association of Municipalities and Communities are defined with their substitutes for two years.

The establishment of the Regional Committees for Equality was considered necessary to implement an effective policy on equal chances between women and men, which requires essential collaboration and participation of all local and regional factors as well as to promote the principle of equality, which requires a strategy of communication, information, and awareness-raising of all local social bodies of the regions.

The General Secretariat for Equality participates in the planning of actions for Equality in the Operational Sectoral and Regional Programs and as permanent regular member of the Follow-up Committees to Sectoral Programs and Regional Programs, where it is represented by the Regional Committees for Equality.

Moreover, responsible persons for equality have been defined in the framework of following-up the incorporation of the gender dimension in the under way works of the 3rd Community Support Framework, in the Administrative Authorities of Operational Programs of the 3rd Community Support Framework.

By Prime-Minister's decision, in 2000 an **Interministerial Committee for Gender Equality** was established.

Work of the Committee, among others, is:

- The decision-making for the promotion of the national policy for gender equality, in the framework of the guidelines of the European Union and International Organisations, aiming at the inclusion of the gender dimension in all policies (gender mainstreaming)
- The co-ordination of ministries and institutions of public sector for the process of policies and actions for women at central, regional, and local levels.

The Interministerial Committee processed and worked out the National Action Plan for Gender Equality.

Under the new regulation of Parliament, which is in effect from January 2002, a **Permanent Parliamentary Committee for Equality and Human Rights** was established.

Task of the Committee is the study, research and introducing of proposals aiming at the promotion of the principle of gender equality in education, family, and other social institutions, as well as the implementation by the administration of the principle of gender equality, especially in issues of employment and respect and protection of human rights, in implementation of articles 4 par. 2 and 116 par.2 of the Constitution.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The priorities of the General Secretariat for Equality for 1999-2000 were harmonised with the efforts of the Greek Government to develop the National Employment Plan and to schedule the third Community Support Framework for the period 2000-2006. The new provisions for equality in the Treaty of the European Union, the European texts on the promotion of women's participation in decision-making (Paris Declaration – April 1999) and on the progress of the European policy regarding gender equality have also been taken into consideration.

Thus, the political priorities for the coming period can be summarised as follows:

- Mainstreaming equality issues in all policies;
- Strengthening of the national machinery to promote equality;
- Work – Employment;
- Balanced participation in decision making;
- Violence against women;
- Mass media – Publicity.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The principle of mainstreaming constitutes the basic concern of the General Secretariat for Equality. The implementation of gender mainstreaming focuses on those seven sectors: employment, women's entrepreneurship, education and training, individual rights, foreign relations, awareness-raising and policy regarding commission staff.

A. DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER DIMENSION IN PUBLIC POLICIES (GENDER MAINSTREAMING)

SOCIAL PROTECTION

- Health and Welfare
- Social Security

EMPLOYMENT AND WORK RELATIONS

- Equal opportunities between men and women in the 3rd Community Support Framework
- Measures to improve women's access and participation in job market
- Sectoral and Regional Entrepreneurial Programs
- Measures for equal opportunities between men and women in other community programs and initiatives

EDUCATION

- Legal Framework
- Structure of Educational System
- Illiteracy
- Intercultural Education
- Teaching Personnel in Elementary and Secondary Education
- School Advisors
- Teaching Personnel in Tertiary Education
- Positive Actions of the General Secretariat for Equality
- Activities in the framework of the 3rd Community Support Framework

ENVIRONMENT

- Housing Policy
- Integrated Local Programs of Viable Development

B. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMATION

In the framework of its competence for the revision of the Constitution, the Greek Parliament unanimously decided to revise Article 116 par. 2, according to a proposal of 58 members of Parliament.

So, in 2001 the Constitution's article 116, par. 2 was revised and declinations from the principle of gender equality were abolished and the obligation of the State to take special positive measures for the elimination of discriminations against, mainly, women was ensured, so as to actually implement the principle of gender equality in all fields.

C. RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was adopted by Greece in the United Nations Organization on 2nd March 1982, and was legislatively ratified by the Parliament on 30th March 1983 with Law No 1342/1983.

Greece was one of the first 22 member-states of the U.N. that signed, on 10th December 1999, the Optional Protocol of the International Convention of the U.N. on the fighting of all forms of discrimination against women, which was legislatively ratified with Law 2952/2001.

D. HARMONISATION OF NATIONAL TO COMMUNITY LEGISLATION

Presidential Decree 176/1997 harmonizes national legislation to the E.E.C. Directive 92/85/EEC on the implementation of measures that aim at the amelioration of health and security of pregnant and breast-feeding women employees. Presidential Decree 41/2003 completes the provisions of Presidential Decree 176/97.

Presidential Decree 105/2003 adjusts internal law to the provisions of Directive 97/80/EEC, concerning the significance of proof in cases of discriminatory gender-based treatment.

E. LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS PER THEMATIC FIELD

FAMILY LAW

Under Law No 1329/83, Family Law was modernised and adapted to the constitutional order of gender equality.

EMPLOYMENT

Under Law 1414/84 the Greek legislation was harmonised to E.E.C. Recommendations 75/117 and 76/207, regarding the implementation of gender equality in work relations.

Under Law 1483/84 provisions were established to facilitate employees with family obligations, and laws 2639/98 and 2683/99 improving relative provisions in public and private sectors followed.

Under National Collective Labour Conventions of years 2000 to 2004 the legislation in force for private sector employees is improved as regards equality in work relations, parental leaves, paternity leaves, etc.

Under Law No 2913/2001 of the Ministry of National Defense, there are no more discriminations against women as regards their admission in military academies.

Under Law No 3103/2003, women's quota for their admission in Police-officer academies is abolished. Moreover, Law No 3113/2003 abolishes a corresponding regulation that was in force for the employment of women as frontier guards.

SOCIAL SECURITY

With a series of laws the retirement / pension arrangements were modernised and all existing gender-based discrimination in the retirement protection was abolished (Laws 1902/90, 2084/92, N. 2676/99).

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Law No 3064/2002 provides for the abolition of trafficking in human beings, of crimes against sexual freedom, of minors' pornography and, in general, of economic exploitation of sexual life. More specifically, Presidential Decree 233/2003 was issued to assist victims of the above mentioned crimes.

CORRECTIONAL TREATMENT OF WOMEN

Law No 2776/2000 establishes the new Correctional Code, which, exactly as the previous one (Law No 1851/1989), imposes full equality in the treatment of detainees men and women with no discrimination, and provides for special measures for mothers-detainees and their children.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING CENTRES

Law No 2839/2000 provides for the participation of, at least, 1/3 from each sex in official councils and in collective instruments of public bodies and local authorities organisations. Nowadays there are positive results following the implementation of the quota of by at least 1/3 participation of both sexes in official councils (Law No 2839/12/9/00, article 6, par.1): out of a total of 21 official councils in Ministries, the women's participation rate ranges from 40% to 60%.

Law No 2910/2001 defines the participation of both sexes by 1/3 in ballot-papers of Prefectural and Municipal Elections.

NATIONALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

Law No 1483/84 establishes full equality between women and men as regards obtaining, changing, and maintaining the Greek citizenship, while, at the same time, releases obtaining or loss of Greek citizenship from marriage.

Law No 2910/2001 abolishes deadlines that were in force under the above mentioned law and some of its provisions were improved as necessary.

Ongoing positive actions to promote gender mainstreaming comprise the:

- Establishment of an equality office at every ministry;
- Creation of an information network on a nationwide level to inform about the events taking place in the EU;
- Establishment of an equality office in the state television corporation;
- Development of training modules on gender equality for senior civil servants, lower and middle managers and other key personnel.

F. POLITICAL PRIORITIES FOR PERIOD 2004 – 2008

During period 2001 – 2004 (till March), when a government change took place, a National Action Plan on Equality was implemented with basic goal the modernisation of social model, aiming at the best possible use of human resources, independently of gender, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

For period 2004 – 2008 the General Secretariat for Equality plans, in the framework of the new Governmental Program, an Integrated strategic intervention aiming at presenting the significant political, social, economic and developmental dimension of issues of equality between men and women, as well as their European and national significance.

The basic tools of the above mentioned intervention will be:

- The integration of equal opportunities between men and women in all instruments, policies and Government's actions (**gender mainstreaming**);
- Carrying out concrete **specific actions** in the following sectors, which will be affixed as priority sectors:
 - combating of lack of equality in job market and work relations;
 - prevention and combating of domestic violence and trafficking in women;
 - combating of stereotypic perceptions on the role of the two sexes in educational procedure, with emphasis on elementary education.
- The reinforcement of **social dialogue** with social partners as well as **dialogue with civil society** (NGOs);
- The formation of a policy of motives for enterprises aiming at the promotion of equality between men and women in their job practices.

HUNGARY¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

In 1995, no government body existed to handle women's policies. Nevertheless, the government appointed the Minister of Labour as its representative at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. In March 1995, a Hungarian National Committee, which included representatives of ministries, parliament, all sides involved in collective bargaining, NGOs, women's organisations as well as the church, was established.

The '*Hungarian national mechanism ensuring equality for women*' was created in 1995 by Government Resolution No. 2268/1995 (IX. 8.). The *Secretariat for Women Policies* was launched within the Ministry of Labour on the basis of the resolution, as the single governmental level organisation in charge of the improvement of the status of women, which, however, did not have local or regional level organisations and institutions.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

The above Secretariat continued its operations from 1996 as Secretariat for Equality of Opportunities, and since the change of government in 1998 it functions as the Secretariat for Women's Representation, as part of the Department for Social Relations in the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

As a gesture towards the 1995 Platform for Action developed in Beijing the Hungarian government set up a Secretariat for Women's Policy in the Ministry of Labour which was launched in late 1995. The unit continued its work in 1996 as Secretariat for Equal Opportunities. In 1997 the Government adopted a resolution concerning the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, providing for an action programme. This was the first effort aimed at introducing the principle of influencing functional political measures (gender mainstreaming) in practice, for it set up an inter-ministerial committee to coordinate governmental work aiming at securing equality of opportunities for women and men.

After the change of government in 1998 the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs became the governmental organ in charge of the improvement of the situation of women, as legal successor to the Ministry of Labour. The Secretariat for Equal Opportunities was reorganised and renamed Secretariat of Women's Representation and it continued the implementation of the tasks laid out in the action programme, with a rather modest budget.

¹ Last update provided in July 2004.

Following the government change in 2002 the governmental unit facilitating the advancement of women was transferred to the Ministry of Employment Policy and Labour at the level of a department, and then in 2003 the head of the department was appointed minister without portfolio in charge of the equality of opportunities, by the Prime Minister. The new minister was working within the organisation of the Prime Minister's Office. In 2004 the office working alongside the minister without portfolio in charge of the equality of opportunities, called Government Office for the Equality of Opportunities, was also set up.

Roma issues, civil society issues, women's and gender policies are each dealt with at department level within this new organisation, however, Roma and civil issues are represented at state secretary level, while women's policies and gender policies are not. Likewise, the rest of the ministries do not have women's and gender policy units either.

The frequent changing of the name of the organisation unit, its reorganisations and the alterations of its position within the hierarchy of the ministry as well as those of its scope of powers obviously had an impact on the operation and the effectiveness of the work of the organisation, despite all efforts to the contrary. This was one of the reasons why the appointment of the minister without portfolio, in charge of the equality of opportunities, was something of a breakthrough in May 2003 along with the establishment of the Government Office for the Equality of Opportunities with effect from 1 January 2004. This was an institutional arrangement capable of enforcing the policy of gender mainstreaming in a complex and more effective way and of taking some steps towards gender budgeting (that is the application and enforcement of gender aspects in the budget in effect) as well.

IN SUMMARY:

The eventful nine years of the history of the 'national mechanism' of women's and gender policy under three different governments, set up in four different ministries (i.e. the department of 6-7 staff with seven heads of department so far) indicate that the promotion of the resolving of the issue is a highly complex area demanding political consensus and coordination of intents, where there is a need for a single approach overarching government terms at least in terms of the basic principles (which should also be reflected in each of the annual budgets as well).

COUNCIL FOR WOMEN'S ISSUES:

In Government Resolution No. 1059/1999 (V. 28.) on 28 May 1999 the Government decided on the establishment of the Women's Issues Council, in order to modernise the system of interest representation. The members of the Council included representatives of ministries, experts and of civil organisations.

The Women's Issues Council (a body of 30 members, half of them civil servants representing the ministries, the other half from the civil sector and experts), had no authorisation to develop a new action programme, it only had a mandate for consultation, commenting, making proposals and for coordinating activities. The Council received no budget funding, consequently, it could not initiate real action, research or assessments of the situation and it could perform no monitoring or evaluation. It was true, however, that themes and debates on the status of women and men were brought increasingly to the limelight for the first time and the Council of Women's Issues provided a framework for the commenting on a number of draft pieces of legislation and for the elaboration of proposals (to the Labour Code, with respect to domestic violence etc.). The Council of *Women's Issues did not have its own budget* its operating costs were covered by the Department of Women's Issues.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Following the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing the Government of Hungary set up an inter-departmental committee for the implementation of the Action Programme tasked with the coordination of governmental work aimed at ensuring equality of opportunities for women. The action programme aimed at implementing in Hungary the tasks laid out in the so-called Beijing Declaration is laid out in Government Resolution No. 2174/1997 (VI. 26.).

After the Beijing World Conference on Women in 1997 the Ministry of Labour elaborated an action programme of 7 points aiming at improving the status of women in society. The implementation of this action programme approved in 1997 by a government resolution was the goal of the efforts of the institutional mechanism (department in the ministry) up to end-2001, which was set up to improve the situation of women and which has been operating ever since on a continuous basis.

The 1997 Action Programme (the only one ever since) was comprised of seven items:

The majority of the items consisted of the ordering of the preparation of surveys, impact studies, expert recommendations, commissioning of the performance of impact assessments and proposals as well as the development of an information and statistics system. (Beijing Platform for Action: area of concern H: institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women).

Another major area was that of education and training (area of concern B: education and training of women).

The third and fourth areas comprises practical assistance: provision of legal advice by phone for individuals, provision of advice for applications to civil organisations, writing of applications (areas of concern I and D: human rights of women, violence against women).

The remaining 8 areas of concern specified in Beijing were not included in the Hungarian Action Programme. For on the one hand, at the beginning it was really the above four areas where it was possible to start a systematic construction process, on the other hand, these areas are the ones that generate the smallest amount of conflicts in the course of implementation. This is particularly true if they are not accompanied by systematic benchmarking, evaluation and monitoring.

A number of positive steps have been taken against discrimination against women and to repress violence against women and children, in particular the following two examples

1. Although in the Republic of Hungary the prohibition of negative discrimination is enshrined both in the Constitution and a number of other pieces of legislation, the adoption in 2003 of the Act on '*equal treatment and the advancement of the equality of opportunities*' is regarded as a major achievement. This act declares that the promotion of the equality of opportunities is primarily a duty for the state and its declared objective is to provide effective legal protection for those suffering from negative discrimination. Pursuant to the Act the violations of the requirement of equal treatment include direct and indirect negative discrimination, harassment, unlawful segregation, retaliation and orders or instructions concerning such. These concepts are defined by law and the features constituting the basis of direct negative discrimination include *inter alia* gender, sexual orientation and sexual identity.

2. A series of initiatives may be reported on in respect of the *prevention of violence against women and children*.

Since 2001 no new Action Programme has been introduced, owing to the following circumstances:

- A government change took place in 2002, the left-of-centre Hungarian Socialist Party formed a coalition government. The department for women's policy was transferred to the Ministry of Labour where it promptly initiated a new action programme which was coordinated with ministries from February 2003.
- The various ministries took the initiative very positively, i.e. they would have approved it with minor modifications. However, owing to the repeated institutional transformation of the department (now called department for the equality of opportunities for the genders, for the Prime Minister appointed the minister in charge of the equality of opportunities in the spring of 2003 and the department was subordinated to the newly appointed minister) in the maze of legislative changes and owing to the primacy of other more urgent political tasks the initiative was dropped from the agenda.
- The new institution: the Government Office for the Equality of Opportunities (including the gender equality department) which was thereby elevated to the highest level of the state administration system - the Prime Minister's Office - was only set up from 1 January 2004, according to the relevant government decree.
- The development of an action programme with the aim of improving gender equality was promptly included in the work programme of the new institution covering the first half of 2004. Unfortunately, there is, again, one obstacle and that is another likely institutional reorganisation.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

So far the 'gender mainstreaming' strategy has been met by substantial resistance for its professional comprehension needs a very wide range of knowledge (in the fields of social policy, demography, statistics, sociology, social security, labour management etc.).

It is often impossible to have functional bureaucrats to accept, in the framework of various technical or professional decisions, why the situation of women be attached priority among the numerous socially disadvantaged groups. This counter-argument has been voiced many times already and quite a number of development policy decisions have been made by the public power under this argument.

One positive fact is that the general concept of equal opportunities is growing increasingly widely known among people (meaning primarily the equality of opportunities of the Roma population and those living with disabilities, with the majority population), thanks to the extreme efforts and activity of the minister in charge of the equality of opportunities. Unfortunately, however, neither the expression general social 'gender equality' the concept itself has become widely accepted in Hungary. Up to 2003 there was no politician or political power to use or to dare to use this concept, but since 2003 the situation has changed.

Even the mere mentioning of 'gender based discrimination' (at international development fora, in committees, state administration documents, practical decision making fora - i.e. not at constitutional/legislative level!) is often faced by opposition.

The situation may be improved in a longer run by facts, by the presentation of gender-sensitive data and statistics. In this area our **statistical yearbook** issued each year since 2000 on the status of women and men is regarded as a definite success. (*Situation of women and men in Hungary, 2000; 2001; 2002*).

Special mention should be made of the preparation of the consolidated No. 4 and No. 5 governmental report of Hungary in year 2000 for the CEDAW Committee.

This is when the preparation of this report was first publicised in a wider circle (for up to that year it had been prepared by a small group of professionals in English, so it was not accessible for the general public). In 2000, however, the part report was written by 20 experts under cooperation of 12 ministries and nationwide institutions and the final version it was also commented on by civil organisations. It may be asserted accordingly, that this was the time when the fact became widely known, as a very result of this effort, that there is a governmental organ of nationwide competency in charge of the improvement of the status of women in order to implement goals that have been recognised by the government through UN agreements and have been ratified by Parliament.

Parliament ratified the Supplementary Protocol to the CEDAW Convention as well in 2001.

Good examples:

- Publication of statistical yearbook on the status of women and men (*Situation of women and men in Hungary, 2000; 2001; 2002*) (*Nők és férfiak helyzete Magyarországon 2000; 2001; 2002*) and supporting of the creation in 1999 of the thematic home page (Women's Data Store) of the Social Research Institute (TÁRKI), and of its permanent operation.
- An act was adopted in 2003 on equal treatment and the advancement of the equality of opportunities. This act also applies a broad interpretation of the concept of the equality of opportunities i.e. it defines negative discrimination on the basis of 20 different features. Discrimination by gender is only one of the 20 applied features (including colour of skin, nationality, membership of ethnic or national minority, mother tongue, disabilities etc).
- State action against violation within the family (Parliament adopted a resolution in 2003 concerning the development of a national strategy aiming at the prevention and effective handling of intra-family violence)

ICELAND¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Equal Status Council:* The Equal Status Council was established in 1976 (1985/1991) and its members are appointed by the Minister of Social Affairs following each general election. Its objective is to shape policy on equal rights issues. The Council functions as an advisory body to the authorities, provides organisations and the public with necessary information and conducts research on equal rights issues. The national budget granted to it in 1990 was 10 140 000 ISK; in 1991, 13 260 000 ISK and in 1992, 19 700 000 ISK.
- *Equal Status Complaints Committee:* This committee was established in 1991. According to the Equal Status Act from 1991, the Minister of Social Affairs appoints a three-member complaints committee for a period of three years at a time. All committee members shall be qualified lawyers, one of them appointed by the minister, the other two are appointed by the Supreme Court, one of whom shall be the Chairperson of the committee. The committee is responsible for the registration of infringements of the provisions of the Act as well as for investigating cases in such instances and forwarding its conclusions to the parties concerned. If the person concerned does not accept the conclusion reached by the complaints committee, the committee has the power to initiate legal proceedings in order to establish the recognition of the rights of the plaintiff in consultation with him or her. As regards the budget, see Equal Status Council – these two bodies share an office.
- *Local Equal Status Committees:* In 1975, the first municipal equal status committees were established. During the next few years, their number rapidly increased even though no legal provisions had been adopted regarding their establishment. In 1991, the Equal Status Act was incorporated, providing that municipalities with more than 500 inhabitants establish equal status committees. At the end of 1994, 44 out of 55 municipalities with more than 500 inhabitants had communicated the appointment of an equal status committee. The functions of these committees are in many ways similar to those of the Equal Status Council: They keep abreast of the position of women and progress in equal rights issues in their own communities and they serve as advisory bodies for town councils and other local authorities.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

In 2000 Althingi (the Icelandic Parliament) approved a new Act on the Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men No. 96/2000, the Gender Equality Act for short. The Act was revised for two main reasons: to take account of the changes that had occurred in the field of gender equality and changes of emphasis in projects and methodology, and to

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

stimulate development towards equality in important areas of society. During revision, therefore, special attention was paid to gender equality in administration, and the definition of specific projects to work on. It was also emphasized that gender equality must be the responsibility of both sexes. The Act abolished the Equal Status Council in its previous form.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

Article 2 of the Act establishes a new institution dedicated exclusively to this area, The Centre for Gender Equality (Jafnréttisstofa), which is administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and is entrusted with the monitoring of the application of the Act. The new institution has taken over most of the tasks of the former Equal Status Bureau, including to:

- Provide education and information;
- Provide counselling to authorities, institutions, businesses, individuals and non-governmental organisations;
- Provide suggestions and proposals on activities in the matters of equality to the Minister of Social Affairs, the Equal Status Council and other authorities;
- Increase activity in matters of equality, e.g. by increased participation of men in such activities;
- Monitor the developments of the society in matters of equality, e.g. through research and the gathering of information;
- Provide assistance to equal status committees, equal status counsellors, and the equal status representatives of local authorities, institutions and businesses;
- Undertake other tasks consistent with the aim and scope of the Act as further instructed by the minister.

Public institutions, employers, and non-governmental organisations shall be obliged to provide the Centre for Gender Equality general information which it may need for its operations. In special circumstances, the Centre for Gender Equality may initiate legal proceedings to obtain recognition of the rights of the plaintiff on the basis of the opinions rendered by the Complaints Committee on Equal Status.

According to Article 4 of the Gender Equality Act, No. 96/2000, the Minister of Social Affairs shall appoint a Complaints Committee on Equal Status. The role of the Complaints Committee shall be to consider and issue in writing a substantiated opinion on whether the provisions of the law have been violated. The Committee's opinion shall not be subject to appeals to higher authority.

An Equal Status Council is defined in Article 7 of the Gender Equality Act. In the wake of each parliamentary election, the Minister of Social Affairs shall appoint a nine member Equal Status Council. The Minister appoints the chairman without nomination, and representatives are nominated from national women's organisations, social partners and the University of Iceland. The nominating parties shall nominate one man and one woman for each seat on the Equal Status Council. There shall be appointed an approximately equal number of women and men. Article 8 of the Gender Equality Act states that the Equal Status Council shall make systematic efforts to equalize the status and the right of women and men in the labour market. The Council shall submit proposals to the Minister of Social Affairs on measures to be taken in this field.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

According to Article 9 of the Gender Equality Act, No. 96/2000, the Minister of Social Affairs shall, concurrently with the submission of the motion for a parliamentary resolution and its review two years later, present to the Althingi a report on the status and development in matters of equality. Such a report was submitted, according to the previous laws, to Althingi in 1998, 2001, and according to the new laws in April 2004. The most recent report recounts the status and result of the numerous goals, programs and projects set forth in the previous action plan. A new action plan was submitted to Althingi in April 2004 and approved at the end of May 2004. The action plan was developed by the Centre for Gender Equality in collaboration with gender equality coordinators in the ministries. The action plan includes provisions for external evaluation of the action plan after two and four years.

According to Article 10 of the Gender Equality Act, local governments must have gender equality committees, focusing (among other things) on informing civil servants and heads of institutions. These committees shall supervise, and participate in, the process of setting an action plan for the municipality.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The national action plan on gender equality approved by Althingi in May of 2004 states that gender mainstreaming is the method which shall be used to achieve gender equality. The responsibility for introducing gender mainstreaming into all aspects of decision making is placed with the Ministry for Social Affairs.

IRELAND¹

1. SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Parliament:* Joint Oireachtas (Parliamentary) Committee on Women's Rights This all-party committee of the Parliament was first established in 1983 to report on the impact on national equality of policy and legislation on women and was re-established following each subsequent general election.
- *Minister for Equality and Law Reform:* The first Minister for Equality and Law Reform was appointed with the establishment of the new *Department of Equality and Law Reform* in 1993. His responsibility was to secure equality of treatment for groups in society that have suffered from discrimination, disadvantage and disability through institutional, administrative and legal reforms. The total budget of the Department in 1995 was 14 688 330 €. This included funding for services or bodies which operate under the aegis of the Department, (such as the Employment Equality Agency), Commissions, Task Forces and grant aid to voluntary organisations and other services.
- *Employment Equality Agency:* The Employment Equality Agency, which operated under the aegis of the Department of Equality and Law Reform, was established under the Employment Equality Act of 1977. The total Exchequer funding for the Agency in 1995 was 609 034 €.
- *Second Commission on the Status of Women:* This commission was established by the Government in 1990. Its terms of reference included a review of the implementation of the recommendations of the First Commission on the Status of Women and to consider and make recommendations on the means, administrative and legislative, by which women will be able to participate on equal terms and conditions with men in economic, social, political and cultural life and, to this end, to consider the efficacy and feasibility of positive action measures. The Commission reported to Government in 1993.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1. CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

PARLIAMENT:

- *The Joint Oireachtas (Parliamentary) Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights* reports, *inter alia*, on the impact of national equality policy and legislation on women. In 1998, a Sub-Committee of the new Joint Committee on Justice, Equality and Women's Rights, to be known as the Sub-committee on Women's Rights was established. The Sub-Committee pursued an active work programme. On the occasion of formation of the new Committee, of the 29th Dáil {Parliament} in 2002, the

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

decision was made not to form a Sub-Committee on Women's Rights, but to include matters relating to women's rights and equality issues in the main work programme of the Joint Committee. The Committee debates legislation on women's rights and provides a parliamentary focus for women's groups and others to discuss women's policy concerns. The committee has contributed significantly to research on women's issues. Two special sessions of the Sub-committee, held on 5 February 2002 and 19 November 2003, were devoted to reviewing progress on gender equality. The Committee has made recommendations on equality in educational and social welfare provisions, the portrayal of women in the media, sexual violence, equal opportunities in employment, childcare, women's presence in local administrative decision making, the barriers to women in business and the impact of European equality legislation on women's affairs in Ireland.

GOVERNMENT

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Cabinet responsibility for gender equality rests with *the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform* who has the support of a Minister of State. The Gender Equality Section of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, under the direction of the Minister, is responsible for implementing a number of Government commitments on gender equality, supporting policy development on gender issues, and monitoring national and international commitments on gender equality, including reporting on gender equality issues for which other Government Departments and state agencies are responsible. The Gender Equality Section has a dedicated staff of ten working solely on policy matters, with additional staff working on legislation and on programme delivery areas, such as Childcare and Violence against Women.

- The *Equality Authority* (see below) was established under the Employment Equality Act of 1998, subsuming and extending the role of the Employment Equality Agency.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

GOVERNMENT

Government Memoranda - since 1992 all Government Memoranda are required to indicate the impact of policy proposals on women.

Government Departments – Each Government Department has a focal point to assist with reporting on gender equality matters.

OFFICE FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

In addition, each **Government Department has a Co-ordination Unit** dedicated to promoting the implementation of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy. As there are significant gender aspects in the Plan, the work of these units is also relevant to promoting greater equality for women. The implementation of this Strategy is overseen by a Cabinet Sub-Committee and a Senior Officials Group.

A Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics was set up under the aegis of the Department of the Taoiseach (Prime Minister). A Report produced by the Steering Group entitled *Developing Irish Social and Equality Statistics to meet Policy Needs* in 2003. The

new partnership agreement, *Sustaining Progress*, contains a commitment to further this work to develop a framework for social and equality statistics. There is also a Government commitment to develop a formal Data/Statistics Strategy within each Government Department as an integral part of its information strategy.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM

A *Childcare Directorate* has been established with a staff of 21 to administer a budget of €449 million to increase the supply and quality of childcare throughout Ireland as part of the National Development Plan 2000 - 2006.

A *National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women* was set up in 1997 to bring together State organisations and voluntary bodies working with women who are the victims of violence, including domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and prostitution. Regional Committees have also been established in each of the eight health boards to co-ordinate the relevant services at local level.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION AGENCY

The National Domestic Violence Intervention Agency is currently operating on a pilot basis in two District Court areas in Dublin. The Agency aims to ensure that victim safety is maximised by institutionalising policies and practices, in the civil and judicial systems and other key agencies, which hold the perpetrator accountable. The project is based on similar Domestic Violence Intervention Projects in other jurisdictions which have proved very successful in reducing incidents of domestic violence and domestic murders.

The Equality Authority (previously the Employment Equality Agency) was created under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and operates under the aegis of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. It has statutory responsibility to work towards the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities on all nine grounds of the equality legislation², including gender, in employment and vocational training and in the provision of goods, facilities and services. It also provides information to the public in relation to equality legislation and assistance on a strategic basis to individuals seeking redress under the equality legislation. The Authority has a staff of 45 and its budget for 2003 was € 4,851,000. Because the Authority operates an integrated equality agenda across the nine grounds of the equality legislation, it is difficult to itemise the staff working on gender except on casework where in 2003, 19% of the caseload was on gender. The Authority also provides information on legislation governing maternity, adoptive and parental leave. For more information on the work of the Authority, see www.equality.ie.

The Office of Director of Equality Investigations (ODEI - the Equality Tribunal) operates under the aegis of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and provides the main locus of redress of first instance for equality cases arising under both employment equality and equal status legislation. The Equality Tribunal has a staff of thirty-one including its Director, and its budget for 2003 was €1,849,000. For more information on the work of the Equality Tribunal, see www.odei.ie.

Ireland's equality legislation prohibits discrimination on the following grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

The Department of Education and Science established a *Gender Equality Unit* in 2001 to advise and promote the incorporation of a gender equality perspective in all areas of education. The Unit is co-financed from Structural Funds. The Unit works with all the stakeholders in the education system, including policy development staff, teachers and those concerned with human resources, to increase awareness of gender equality. As a complementary activity, the Unit is funding research into discrete areas of the education system where there are significant gender equality issues and has run a series of public debates on the theme of masculinities. The Unit has a staff complement of four dedicated employees. Further information on the work of the Unit can be obtained from www.education.ie.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

The Department of Finance has an *Equality Unit* which supports the development of equality initiatives in the civil service, including on gender equality. The Unit drafted a new gender equality policy and monitors Government targets in this area. The Unit liaises directly with Personnel Managers in Government Departments who are required to report annually on gender equality issues.

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Development Co-operation Ireland is the Government of Ireland's programme of assistance to developing countries. Ireland's development co-operation policy and programme reflect our longstanding commitment to human rights and fairness in international relations and are inseparable from Irish foreign policy as a whole. DCI have recruited a **Senior Development Specialist with specific responsibility for advising on gender issues** and supporting the mainstreaming strategy within the development co-operation programme.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND CHILDREN

The Women's Health Council was established in 1997 with the following remit: advising on all aspects of women's health; assisting the development of national and regional policies and strategies designed to increase health gain and social gain for women; developing expertise on women's health within the health services, and liaising with other relevant international bodies, which have similar functions to the Council. The Council has a staff of seven and its current budget is just over €500,000.

The Crisis Pregnancy Agency was established in 2001 and was given the task of drawing up a national strategy to address crisis pregnancy and to oversee its implementation, in consultation with government and other non-statutory bodies.

OTHER

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP IN IRELAND

The six Social Partnership Agreements to date - which are focused principally on incomes, fiscal, social, economic and competitiveness policies - were negotiated between the Government and the social partners. The social partners are organised into four pillars as follows:

- Trade Union Pillar;
- Employer and Business Pillar;
- Farming Pillar;
- Community and Voluntary Pillar (included for first time in negotiations on *Partnership 2000*).

Management of the implementation of the current agreement *Sustaining Progress* is overseen by a Steering Group comprised of the social partners and Government Departments. The Steering Group meets quarterly in plenary session.

Structures set up under the Social Partnership framework which impact on gender equality include the following:

- The Centre for Social Partnership (set up in 1997 to support change and innovation in the workplace including in relation to work/life balance policies);
- The National Framework for Work/Life Balance Policies;
- National Framework Committee for Equal Opportunities at the Level of the Enterprise.

In addition, ad hoc working groups are set up as required, for example, the Committee which reported in 2001 on Women's Access to the Labour Market.

The Equality for Women Measure of the National Development Plan 2000-6 is currently funding 70 projects with the objective of increasing women's participation in the labour market, business and decision-making. The Measure is also supporting networking among projects. Further information on the Equality for Women Measure can be found on www.ewm.ie.

IRISH OBSERVATORY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Irish National Observatory on Violence Against Women, which was launched on 15th April 2002, is a mechanism developed by the European Women's Lobby for monitoring Ireland's progress on the issue of violence against women. It was the first observatory to be launched. Three other national observatories have now been launched in Denmark, Greece and France.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

NATIONAL PLAN FOR WOMEN 2002

The Report to the United Nations on the National Plan for Women 2002 on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is Ireland's response to the invitation to governments made in the Political Declaration by the United Nations General Assembly in New York in 2000 to develop and implement national action plans to work towards the advancement of women in all areas of society.

The Report to the United Nations submitted to the UN in October 2002, is Ireland's programme to advance the situation of women across the twelve Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action.

A draft Plan was published in October 2001 to inform and guide a consultation process which was launched at the same time. The task of overseeing the consultation process was led by a representative Steering Committee chaired by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

The consultation process was hugely successful in giving the women of Ireland the opportunity for their views to be recorded. A wide array of issues was raised by women and their representative groups. These are reproduced in a separate document entitled "*Aspirations of Women collected in the course of the Consultation Process on the National Plan for Women 2002: Towards a National Women's Strategy*" which gives a valuable and unique insight into the views and aspirations of the women of Ireland at the beginning of the new millennium. This will serve to guide and influence Government policy into the future.

Both documents are available on the website of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform at www.justice.ie.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY

A key recommendation in Ireland's *Report to the United Nations on the National Plan for Women 2002*, was the development of a National Women's Strategy as the framework for Ireland's gender equality agenda for the coming years.

Arising from this the Government made a commitment in the latest social partnership agreement "Sustaining Progress" to develop a five-year National Women's Strategy. The Strategy will build on the progress made towards greater gender equality in Ireland in the coming years.

Proposals for the development of the Strategy are currently being formulated.

Under the *National Employment Action Plan 2003-5* Employment and Human Resources OP 2000-2006 has as an objective increasing women's labour market participation.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

GENDER MAINSTREAMING UNDER THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Gender mainstreaming is a requirement for all policies and programmes funded under the National Development Plan, 2000 to 2006 (NDP). The NDP is a plan for the investment of €51 billion over seven years in Irish infrastructure, education, industry, natural resources, social inclusion and regional development. It is funded through the Irish Exchequer (93%) and the European Union Structural Funds (7%).

Specific gender mainstreaming requirements include: equal opportunities to be incorporated into project selection criteria; indicators to monitor progress to be broken down by gender where possible; equal opportunities to be incorporated into all evaluations; and gender balance to be promoted on monitoring committees overseeing progress. Gender impact assessment of most measures is also required.

The Plan provides for a number of structural supports to assist in the gender mainstreaming process:

- The establishment of the NDP Gender Equality Unit within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to assist Government Departments and State Agencies to gender mainstream their policies and programmes;
- The identification of equal opportunities as an objective of human resources and regional policy;
- Acknowledgement of the impact of equal opportunities between women and men in spending on infrastructure and productive investment;
- Provision of project gender impact assessment across the whole Plan;
- Establishment of an equal opportunities and social inclusion co-ordinating committee;
- Childcare investment to help parents, particularly women, to balance their work and family commitments;
- An equal opportunities measure focused on the needs of women returning to the labour market, tackling vertical and horizontal segregation, promoting family friendly working arrangements and women in decision-making.

As the lead department with responsibility for equal opportunities between women and men, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is involved in the implementation of the above commitments across the six operational programmes.

NDP GENDER EQUALITY UNIT

The NDP Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform was established in 2000 to support the gender mainstreaming of the NDP through providing advice, training and support to NDP policy makers and implementing bodies, and acting as a source of gender disaggregated data for NDP programmes. The Unit is co-funded by the EU Structural Funds. It has five full time staff, and a budget of €5 million for the period 2000-6.

The work of the NDP Gender Equality Unit includes the following:

- Providing advice, training and information on issues relating to gender mainstreaming in the NDP;
- Collecting and analysing data to support gender mainstreaming;
- Engaging in research to assess and support gender mainstreaming;
- Advising on the gender impact assessment of policy proposals drawn up under the NDP;
- Advising on and developing appropriate indicators (statistical or other data which measures progress towards a goal) to support gender mainstreaming in the NDP;
- Providing inputs to the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee which reviews how NDP commitments in the areas of equal opportunities and social inclusion are being met;
- Providing inputs to the Mid Term Review of the NDP;
- Supporting participation by community and voluntary groups in the gender mainstreaming process, through the provision of a range of resources, including hosting a conference on cross-sectoral partnerships to promote gender equality, and providing training on effective lobbying and women in decision-making
- Piloting two gender budgeting initiatives;
- Providing support for gender equality recommendations following the Mid-Term Review.

For more information on the work of the Unit, see www.ndpgenderequality.ie

ITALY¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *National Commission for Equal Opportunities for women and men.* The Commission was set up under the Prime Minister's Office in 1991 in application of Law no. 164 of 1990. It is a consultative body providing policy guidance aimed at promoting equal opportunities activities. It also acts as a coordinator and point of reference for all government initiatives on equal opportunities. The funding allocated to the Commission for 1994 totalled 1 032 914 €.
- *National Committee for Equality and Equal opportunities in the workplace.* The Committee was set up under Law no. 125 of 1991. A law of the same year placed it under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. It is made up of representatives of trade unions, employers and women's associations. It is chaired by the Minister of Labour. In the sphere of employment policy, the Committee draws up proposals for legislative reform, provides information, promotes positive action and gives opinions on projects in progress. It proposes solutions to collective disputes and promotes adequate representation of women in the government bodies responsible for employment policy. The funding allocated to the Committee for 1994 totalled 516 457 €.
- *Equality advisers:* Established in 1984, these advisers work within regional employment commissions and provincial bodies competent in the field of employment policy. Their functions are established by Law no. 125 of 1991. Their objective is to put into practice the principle of equal treatment for women and men in the sphere of employment and vocational training. They report offences to the judicial authorities, institute legal proceedings and sit on all equality bodies established in local, regional and provincial administrations.
- *Inquiry Board:* Set up in 1991, this body is attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Its purpose is to investigate acts constituting discrimination and means of eliminating them, and it also prepares opinions for the National Committee and Equality Advisers. It is a collegial body, chaired by the Vice-Chair of the National Committee for Equality and made up of members of the judiciary, a works inspectorate manager, the national equality adviser and experts in legal, economic and sociological spheres competent in the employment field.
- *Committee for women's entrepreneurship:* The Committee was set up under Law 215/1992 and placed under the Ministry for Industry and Crafts. It is responsible for the steering and overall programming of the initiatives set out in Law no. 215 and also of positive action to promote women's entrepreneurship.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

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- *Equal Opportunities Committees*: These committees have existed at the various levels of government (national, regional, provincial) since 1997. They are made up of representatives of the public administration and trade unions. The committees collect information and data, promote initiatives and advance proposals to promote parity and equal opportunities as regards work conditions and professional development. Set up in 1989 and attached to the Ministry of Education, these committees also organise seminars and study days in order to promote the inclusion of equal opportunities in school education.
 - *Equal Opportunities Bodies in regional and local administrations*: Since 1976, all regional governments and many local governments have set up committees or consultative institutions for equal opportunities, known as "commissions for equal opportunities". The regional commissions vary in their membership and functions, but all of them promote positive action and fulfil a consultative and supervisory capacity for regional acts and laws.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *National Commission for Equal Opportunities for women and men*. This body was reformed by Legislative decree no. 226 of 2003. Its membership was changed and the Chair, previously appointed by decree of the Prime Minister, is now the Minister for Equal Opportunities. The Commission has been transformed into a body of consultation and proposal. It no longer coordinates government action in the area of equal opportunities but it continues to fulfil a consultative role and to promote studies and research on equality topics. The Commission provides the Minister for Equal Opportunities with advice and support for the framing and implementation of equal opportunity policies.
- *Equality Advisers*. Legislative decree no. 196 of 2000 broadened the function of equality advisers in regional and provincial administrations. In addition to the functions listed in paragraph 1.1, the advisers check that regional development policy planning fits in with community, national and regional guidelines on equal opportunities. They must promote positive action schemes promoting gender equality in the workplace through the identification of community, national and regional resources earmarked for that purpose. The advisers pass on knowledge and exchanges of good practice as well as news of information activities and cultural insight training on equal opportunities issues and different forms of discrimination. The legislative decree also sets up an Equality advisers network, to make their work more effective through exchanges of information, experience and good practices. Article 9 of the decree creates a national fund for the activities of equality advisers, with an annual appropriation of 9 million €. Before that fund was set up, the advisers received no funding, so it is a crucial instrument for their work.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Minister for Equal Opportunities:* A Minister for Equal Opportunities was appointed in 1996. The Minister is delegated by the Prime Minister to plan, guide and coordinate all the initiatives, even of a regulatory nature, connected with promoting equal opportunities and also preventing and eliminating all forms and causes of discrimination. The Prime Ministerial decree of 14 February 2002 broadened the brief of the Minister for Equal Opportunities to the following functions:
 - promoting and coordinating government initiatives aimed at implementing equal opportunities policies in the areas of health, schools, the environment, the family, work and elected offices;
 - promoting and coordinating government initiatives aimed at preventing and eliminating discrimination based on race, ethnic or social origin, genetic traits, religion or personal beliefs, political or any other opinions, membership of a national minority, material situation, birth, illness, age or sexual orientation;
 - taking the necessary initiatives for the planning, guidance, coordination and monitoring of European structural funds in the area of equal opportunities.

The Minister is assigned responsibilities for coordinating the activities of public administration in the area of prevention, assistance and supervision for minors and sexual abuse.

The Minister is also assigned policy steering functions for the adoption of foreign minors in agreement with the Commission for international adoptions set up in 1998. The Minister may interact with the other ministers and with public bodies with a view to attaining the goals set, and may also use a veto to propose that the Council of Ministers re-examine a disputed act. The Minister represents the Italian government in all international and community institutions competent in the equal opportunities field. The funding allocated to the Minister for 2004 totalled 15,798,569 €.

- *Equal Opportunities Department:* the Equal Opportunities Department was established by Prime Ministerial Decree in 1997. It is an administrative body supporting the Minister for Equal Opportunities. It gives policy guidance and proposes and coordinates legislative and administrative initiatives for the framing and implementation of equal opportunities policies in line with the steps taken by the Minister. It manages relations with the General Secretary and the other offices and departments of the Prime Minister's Office as well as with the offices of the National Commission for Equal Opportunities for women and men. The Department coordinates initiatives linked to the planning and use of European structural funds in the area of equal opportunities. An office was set up within it in 2004 to promote equal treatment and combat discrimination. This office operates on a fully autonomous and impartial basis to guarantee the effectiveness of the equal treatment principle. It also has the task of checking for and helping to eliminate discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, cultural differences and religious beliefs.
- *Observatory for Women's Entrepreneurship:* This observatory was set up in February 1997 under a Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities in order to analyse the problems of women's integration into an economic and social context and arrive at action strategies to overcome such problems. The Observatory carries out ongoing monitoring of European, national and local legislation aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship and monitors its impact on the women's sector as well as compliance with equal opportunities requirements. The Observatory has set up an internet site (www.osservatoriodonna.it), featuring numerous services for women, especially those managing or wishing to start up a business. In particular, the site offers free information, guidance and support services for the different stages of business creation and

development. Those services are available on the ground through a network of information desks made available by local public services, institutions, business-sector associations and trade unions with an internet connection and a public information desk.

- *Equal Opportunities Committees*: equal opportunities committees have been set up in recent years within each central state authority. Their task is to promote positive action and measures geared to creating conditions of substantial gender equality in the workplace. There are committees like this at the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education, for example.
- After the Beijing Conference, the *National Statistics Institute (ISTAT)* began studies to produce gender-sensitive data. The Equal Opportunities Department established two contractual agreements with ISTAT: one on ill-treatment within the family and the other on time use. These two research projects each yield an annual report and will continue until 2006. In 2003 ISTAT published a very interesting report on the situation of women: "How women's lives are changing", providing gender-differentiated statistics on employment and data on the reconciling of family and working life.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The national plan of action took the form of a Prime Minister's Directive, circulated in March 1997 to all members of the Government. The objectives set out in the Directive focus on the key concepts of the Beijing Platform for Action: empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming.

In 2001 the Minister for Equal Opportunities, in the Declaration on Equal Opportunities, added six new priorities to those laid down by the 1997 directive.

The target areas for political and institutional action include:

- promotion of women in decision-making and promotion of female representation in government organs;
- gender impact analysis;
- reform of institutional action and equal opportunities bodies.

The following priorities were identified in the economic and social sphere:

- training and education;
- promotion of female entrepreneurship and employment;
- health care, including action to combat the genital mutilation of women;
- combating violence against women and human trafficking;
- combating paedophilia.

Priorities based on an understanding of Italian society:

- women's sexuality and freedom;
- forging of a new culture and new practices in social relations and gender relations;
- national plan for nurseries;
- improving international relations and cooperation.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The national plan of action mentions gender mainstreaming as a major objective. Also, the Minister for Equal Opportunities and her Department have adopted gender mainstreaming in their work. Despite strong resistance from certain politicians, gender mainstreaming has achieved significant results in many areas:

FEMALE REPRESENTATION:

The Constitutional law of 2003 amending Article 51 of the Italian Constitution in respect of access to public positions was a major step forward. The new constitutional article stipulates that the Republic shall, through appropriate measures, promote equal opportunities for men and women as regards access to public positions and elected office.

Parliament approved new rules for the election of members of the European Parliament through Law no. 90 of 8 April 2004. Among other things, this measure, implementing the equal opportunities principle, introduces quotas. The new rules state that neither of the sexes may represent more than one third of candidates, meaning that female representation may not be lower than 33%.

COMBATING TRAFFICKING:

Italy has been committed to combating trafficking in human beings for many years. Article 18 of the Single act on immigration regulations and standards for the status of foreigners (legislative decree no. 286 of 1998) provides for various measures aimed at protecting and assisting trafficking victims. One project, launched in 2000, aimed to create an anti-trafficking free-phone number, a vital support enabling trafficking victims to seek effective help. Law no. 228 on "Measures against human trafficking" was passed in 2003. The law amends certain articles of the Criminal code and establishes heavier penalties for individuals trafficking in human beings. The text of the law is not limited to the punitive aspects but also takes the preventive and social aspects into account.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN:

Law no. 66 on sexual violence was passed in 1996. The law amends the previous norms and considers sexual violence as an offence against personal freedom and not as an outrage of public decency as before.

In 1998, as part of the Urban Community initiative, the Equal Opportunities Department implemented a project for a "national anti-violence network between towns in Italy". The purpose of the project is to survey perceptions and the impact of violence against women within the local community. It also serves as a springboard for introducing integrated schemes for combating violence. These schemes seek to actively involve local players, both public and private. The initiative was first implemented in 8 Italian towns and extended to 18 others in 2001, making a total of 26 towns involved.

Law no. 154 on "Measures against violence in family relations" was passed in 2001. The law introduces measures to combat violence in the family entailing the removal of the person responsible from the family home if supervisory action is necessary to safeguard the integrity of the victim and other family members.

GENITAL MUTILATION OF WOMEN:

The Italian Parliament has passed the bill on genital mutilation of women. The proposed legislation punishes genital mutilation as a specific offence in the Criminal code. But above all the law also tackles the issue of such practices from the social point of view. In the wording of the bill submitted to the Chamber of Deputies, it was ensured that socio-cultural measures were placed before those relating to punishment. Substantial prevention measures were also introduced in the text. These measures are applicable not only in Italy but also, through international cooperation arrangements, in those countries where such practices are still tolerated.

A public information campaign geared to prevention and education has been launched in several Italian regions. It is aimed above all at the migrant communities living in Italy and stresses the grave consequences of infibulation for women's health.

RECONCILING FAMILY LIFE AND WORKING LIFE:

Numerous resources and services have been created for reconciling the multiple roles of women at home and at work:

- The national plan for nurseries, which provides for the building of nurseries in the workplace and the increase of resources available for maintaining and operating these facilities. A special fund for building nurseries has been set up by the Government.
- Law no. 53 of 2000 stipulating the right of parents to be absent from work for a fixed period in order to care for and assist children up to eight years old. Legislative decree no. 151 of 2001 incorporated these provisions and introduced regulations on maternity and paternity leave, leave for child sickness and the possibility of desisting from night shifts. These measures extended leave entitlement for caring for and assisting children to fathers (the entitlement having previously been reserved for women). They also encouraged a new enterprise culture geared to ongoing dialogue between companies and employees.

LATVIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

At the time of the Beijing Conference, there was no *concrete* institution responsible for gender issues. The *Ministry of Welfare*, in charge of labour issues (including equal opportunities at work), social security and health matters, had informal responsibility for gender issues. Other public authorities were responsible for gender equality as far as it fell within their sphere of competence.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

In 1999, the *Ministry of Welfare* was designated responsible for the development of gender equality policy.

In February 2003 gender equality issues became the responsibility of the *Department of European and Legal Affairs* in the *Ministry of Welfare*. The Ministry has the following functions (according to the *Concept Paper on Gender Equality* approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 16 October 2001):

- to monitor implementation of the gender equality policy;
- to monitor and assess gender equality promotion programmes and projects;
- to monitor the overall situation and assess the political impact from a gender equality perspective;
- to ensure the co-ordination of various normative acts and gender mainstreaming in programmes of industries.

The Gender Equality Council was established and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. This advisory Council comprises representatives from public administration, non-governmental and research institutions and is chaired by the Minister of Welfare. The Council is responsible for:

- promoting and estimating the development and implementation of gender equality policy at all levels of public administration;
- evaluating proposals from institutions, analysing situations and formulating opinions concerning gender equality issues;
- working out recommendations on gender equality policy development and possible solutions, as well as submitting them to responsible institutions;
- promoting cooperation between institutions, at both national and municipal levels and non-governmental organisations in the implementation of gender equality.

¹ Last update provided in April 2004.

The *Gender Equality Council and an Inter-Ministerial Working Group* were set up by governmental decision as the institutional mechanism to co-ordinate gender mainstreaming in the government bodies.

- The *State Bureau of Human Rights* has the following functions:
 - to monitor the compliance with norms in respect of gender equality and non-discrimination;
 - to provide consultations, recommendations on gender equality issues;
 - to review complaints on violations of gender equality;
 - represent individuals in court.
- The *State Labour Inspectorate* enforces application and supervision of labour and health legislation, safety at work and Labour Law on equal treatment.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

The *Inter-Ministerial Working Group*: This Group, set up on 13 December 2001, is composed of representatives from ministries, NGOs, Latvian Free Trade Union and Latvian Employers Confederation. It co-ordinates the incorporation of gender equality principles in the sectoral policies, programmes and normative acts. The Group has an important role in the development process of the Gender Equality Programme.

The Women's Interparliamentary Cooperation Group was set up at the beginning of 2003, by women parliamentarians from different political parties. The 17 women parliamentarians in this group focus on the socio-economic situation of women and their role in society.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

There is an action plan on gender equality issues, which is a part of the National Programme for Integration into Europe. The main activities included in the Programme are: the creation of national machinery on gender equality issues, the drafting of a Programme for the implementation of gender equality and raising the level of awareness on gender equality among policy makers, state institutions, and society. The drafting of the National programme for the implementation of gender equality should be completed by the end of the year 2002.

The European Union's directive provisions on gender equality are already incorporated in the new Latvian labour law.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

On 16 October 2001 the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Concept Paper on Gender Equality which is based on the gender mainstreaming approach and contains the following priorities:

- creation of national machinery;
- training and awareness raising of civil servants in public administration;
- introduction of gender equality principles in legislation, policies, legal acts and programmes;
- development of a Programme for the implementation of gender equality including quantitative and qualitative objectives;
- regular monitoring and evaluation.

The *Law on Labour Protection* and the *Labour Law* both came into force in 2002. The requirements of the EU directives in the field of equal treatment were incorporated in these laws: equal pay, equal access to employment, vocational training and promotion, working conditions, parental leave, burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex and protection of pregnant workers. Awareness raising and understanding of equal treatment between social partners and in the society are needed.

As regards the improvement of the legal framework, on 9 July 2002 the Cabinet of Ministers accepted amendments to the Instruction for preparation of legal acts which provide for the inclusion of ex-ante impact assessment annotations on gender equality.

A training programme for civil servants on gender equality issues was developed in spring 2002 in the Public Administration School. This programme will become one of the compulsory courses for civil servants in the Public Administration School and will be incorporated in the Gender Equality Programme as a public awareness raising activity. In the framework of the project for administrative capacity building, gender equality and mainstreaming training courses for trainers/experts is carried out with a view to ensuring well-prepared and high-level experts in gender equality.

The inter-ministerial working group agreed on the statistical indicators necessary for gender equality analysis by the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia.

In 2004 the Programme for implementing the Concept Paper on Gender Equality was developed and submitted for acceptance by the Cabinet of Ministers.

In 2001 the Nordic and Baltic Ministers for Gender Equality and the Nordic Ministers of Justice agreed to carry out a joint **information and awareness campaign on trafficking in women**. The Campaign, which took place in 2002 simultaneously in eight countries, was financed and carried out under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The aim of the Campaign was to "increase knowledge and awareness among the public, and to initiate discussion about the problems surrounding the issue of trafficking in women". The Latvian Campaign, carried out by the Ministry of Welfare, consisted mainly of seminars for the different target groups: governmental officials, unemployed and low-income women, school children. A television program and a radio discussion were also organised and informative materials on trafficking in human beings were produced.

LIECHTENSTEIN¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Commission for Equality of Rights between Men and Women:* This commission was established in October 1986 as a standing advisory body to the government. It submits recommendations, requests and comments to the government in order to achieve equal rights for women in legislation and it seeks to raise public awareness as regards gender issues. There is no special budget for the commission and the annual budget for projects is 20 000 CHF.
- *Working Group for the Promotion of Equal Rights in the Administration:* This working group was set up in January 1993 and attached to the Ministry of Family and Equality. It draws up guidelines to improve women's situation in the administration. Since 1999 the Working Group has its own budget. The annual budget for projects is 10 000 CHF.
- *Commission for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities between Girls and Women in Education in Liechtenstein:* This commission was established in 1994. Its mandate finished in 1998. It was charged with the promotion of gender equality in schools. Its annual budget was 30 000 CHF.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Commission for Equal Rights between Men and Women:* In 1999, the budget for projects amounts to 20 000 CHF.
- *Working Group for the Promotion of Equal Rights in the Administration:* Since 1999, the working group has its own budget. In 1999, the budget for projects granted to it amounted to 10 000 CHF.
- *Commission for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities between Girls and Women in Education:* The commission was abandoned in 1998.

¹ Based on: Reply to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming and update provided in 2002; 1998 – Die Umsetzung der Aktionsplattform im Fürstentum Liechtenstein, Mai 1998.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Equality Office*: The Equality Office was set up in May 1996 and attached to the Ministry of Family and Equality. It draws up strategies and projects, co-operates with the administration and NGOs, develops the basis for legislation, conducts publicity work and provides advice to private individuals and to the authorities. Since 1 January 1998, the Equality Office has been staffed to a level of 80 per cent. Its annual budget for projects amounts to 150 000 CHF.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

During the preparation for the Beijing Conference, Liechtenstein set itself seven goals which had been achieved by the end of 1996. They related to the establishment of legal equality in the area of nationality law and social security, accession to the CEDAW, the establishment of an Equality Office and the advancement of women within the administration, the promotion of compatibility between family work and employment and the ongoing promotion of the work of NGOs. By the end of 1996, equality had been achieved at the level of legislation.

Four catalogues of measures were approved by government in May 1998 (implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action), in April 1999, in April 2000 and in March 2001. The aim of these catalogues is to promote equality between women and men and to instruct the various branches of government to implement it. The catalogues consist of measures in the field of civil and political rights, education, equal opportunities in employment, compatibility of work and family life, model working hours and the division of responsibilities, divorce law, penal law, laws governing sex offences, the creation of child-friendly and adult-friendly public spaces as well as the creation of affordable housing and improved protection of tenants.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In January 2002, the government set up a steering committee to work out an action plan to implement gender mainstreaming in Liechtenstein. The steering committee has to examine its possible implementation in the field of politics, education, social rights, economy and culture before December 2002.

LITHUANIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *State Counsellor*: In 1994, the State Counsellor was first appointed. He/She is located in the Prime Minister's Office. He/She advises the government on equality and women's affairs. There is only one State Counsellor. Thus, there is not sufficient personnel.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *State Counsellor*: The State Counsellor was replaced by the State Counsellor on Foreign Relations, Equal Opportunities and NGOs in 1997 (see below).

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson*: The Ombudsperson was first appointed in May 1999. She investigates complaints relating to discrimination and sexual harassment, submits recommendations and sets priorities concerning the policy for the implementation of equal rights. She also refers the material to investigative bodies, hears cases of administrative offences and may impose administrative sanctions. In 1999, the Ombudsperson's Office employs 6 persons. The Office's budget for 1999 was approx. 30 000 € and for 2000 and 2001 was approx. 138 000 €.
- *Women's Parliamentary Group*: This parliamentary group was established in 1997 and renewed after elections on Autumn 2000. It is located within the parliament. It consists of 15 members. It initiates legislation and is involved in parliamentary procedures.
- *Commission of Family and Child Affairs of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (Parliament)*: This Commission was renewed after the elections in November 2000. It initiates legislation concerning gender equality and women's rights and is involved in parliamentary supervision. It consists of 9 members (parliamentarians)
- *Minister of Social Security and Labour*: This minister is in charge of equal opportunities questions since 1997. On November 26, 2001, following the decision of the Government No. 1404, the Minister of Social Security and Labour has been appointed to take overall responsibility for coordination of implementation of gender equality issues in all spheres, actually acting as Gender Equality Minister and to be responsible for implementation of gender equality in the fields of the competence of the Ministry

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

- *Labour market and Equal Opportunities Division*: Located in the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, this Division began work on gender equality matters in 1999. It is located in the Ministry of Social Security, under the Labour Department of the Ministry. It implements the government policies on gender equality within the competence of the ministry and coordinates activities on gender equality in other fields. There are two qualified employees in this division and there is a need for more (qualified) personnel.
- *Inter-ministerial Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men*: This commission was established under the authority of the government on 7 March 2000. Its tasks are the co-ordination of the activities of governmental institutions implementing equality policies as well as the submission of proposals and recommendations concerning the achievement of equality to the authorities. There are 18 members responsible for equality matters. The members of the Commission are representatives of all ministries.
- *Demographic Statistic Division of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics*: This division was set up in 1997 and placed under the government. It compiles, analyses and publishes data from gender statistics.
- *Vilnius city municipality*: Person responsible for gender equality issues was established in 2001 and has overall responsibility for gender equality policy, supervision of its implementation and coordination in the territory of Vilnius municipality.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Government of Lithuania approved the “programme for the advancement of Women” in 1996 and the “Implementation plan for 1998-2000 of the Programme for the advancement of Women” at the beginning of 1998. The aim of the programme is to increase women progress whereas the responsibility to implement the programme lies within the different ministries and local authorities. 10 critical areas were identified as follows:

- Protection of human rights of women;
- Women’s socio-economic status;
- Women and environment protection;
- Women’s health, family planning;
- Women and education;
- Women in politics and public administration;
- Violence and harassment against women and girls;
- Women and the media;
- System of statistics and gender differences.

The biggest achievement is that, following the “Implementation plan for 1998-2000 on the Programme for the advancement of women”, the Parliament adopted the *Law on equal opportunities for women and men* at the end of 1998, which entered into force at the beginning of 1999.

On the basis of the *Law on equal opportunities for women and men*, the Parliament introduced an *Ombudsperson for equal opportunities for women and men* on 20 April 1999 and the Ombudsperson’s Office was established on 25 May 1999.

A new *National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men* (National Action Plan) was adopted by the Government in 2003 and implemented before the end of 2004.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

Gender mainstreaming principle is incorporated in the *Law on Equal opportunities for women and men*. Article 3 of the Law establishes duties of state government and administration institutions to implement equal rights in all areas covered by their competence. Articles 4 and 5 establish duties of employers and institutions of education and science to implement equal opportunities.

INSTITUTIONALISATION

The creation of the *Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for women and men* ensured an opportunity to have focal points in every Ministry to be responsible for gender equality issues in the spheres of competence of their Ministries.

The gender mainstreaming principle was laid down as a basic principle in drafting the new National programme on Equal opportunities for women and men.

The project "Gender mainstreaming" started in November 2001, aiming first of all at training in gender mainstreaming for state officials and other target groups.

LUXEMBOURG¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Ministry for the Advancement of Women*: This Ministry was set up in February 1995 under a Grand-Ducal Decree listing ministries and setting out ministerial powers. The Ministry replaced the Department for the Advancement of Women. It is an independent ministry with official ministry status and its own budgetary appropriations. On its inception, it was assigned the following responsibilities: Ensuring the advancement of women, providing secretarial services for and monitoring the work of the Women's Labour Committee, and supervising Women's Hostels.
- *Women's Labour Committee*: This consultative committee was set up in 1984 under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and was then transferred in 1996 to the Ministry for the Advancement of Women. It is in charge of studying, either on its own initiative or following a request from the government, all questions related to the activity, training and professional advancement of women. The committee identifies and suggests to the government or to the Ministry for the Advancement of Women measures that could improve women's situation. The Committee has 21 members coming from women's associations, professional employers' organisations, major representative trade unions at national level and government representatives. Its goal is to improve women's condition in the workplace and in society. The Committee conducts studies and presents proposals to relevant authorities.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Ministry for the Advancement of Women*, created by a Grand Ducal decree of 1 February 1995, is an independent ministry ranking alongside the other ministries with its own budget funding.

The Ministry implements policy aimed at advancing the situation of women and equality between women and men, maintains contact with consultative bodies at national and regional level, handles the inter-ministerial coordination of sectoral policies relating to equality, undertakes studies gauging the impact of legislative measures on equality and promotes positive measures for gender equality at the level of private companies. It is responsible for equality policy matters at international level and supervises services and shelters for girls, women and women with children.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

The budget of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, which in 1995 amounted to 3,421,178 € or 0.10 % of the total state budget, rose to 7,866,227 € in 2004, which constitutes 0.14 % of the total state budget. This represents a budget increase of 129.93% for the budget of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women over the period 1995-2004 compared with an increase of 77.49% for the total state budget.

In 2004, the budget for services and accommodation services for women stands at 6,541,868 €, which represents 83.16 % of the budget of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women.

Luxembourg receives European subsidies for projects implementing the Council decision of 20 December 2000 on the Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005).

The drive to promote equality between women and men have been strengthened by a number of partnerships with different NGOs, particularly in the areas of decision-making, education, culture and a change in the role of men, and also with trade unions, employers organisations and employment and wage tribunals in the area of labour and employment.

- *Women's Labour Committee*: This Committee was legally attached to the Ministry for the Advancement of Women in 1996. Its secretariat is provided by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, and the committee members receive an attendance allowance.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Joint Ministerial Committee on Equality between Women and Men*: The Committee was set up under Grand-Ducal regulations of 31 March 1996 to study all issues relating to equality and may forward its opinions, proposals or suggestions to the Minister for the Advancement of Women. Under its brief the Committee is consulted on any draft legislation liable to affect equality between women and men. It analyses its ramifications for women and men respectively and checks that the terminology is gender-neutral. The committee members act as equality correspondents linking between the Ministers of the department they represent and the committee. In this connection they are circulated with the documents and information necessary for their task and they disseminate within their ministries information and suggestions they consider as useful aids to achieving *de facto* equality between women and men. The secretariat for the Joint Ministerial Committee is provided by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women.
- *Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men and the Advancement of Women*: This committee was set up in the Chamber of Deputies in 1996.
- *Committee on Positive Action*: It was set up under Grand-Ducal regulations of 25 October 1999 and is responsible for giving an opinion on the subsidising of every positive action project carried out in the private sector. It is made up of representatives of the Government and representatives nominated by professional groupings and appointed by the Minister for the Advancement of Women. Its secretariat is provided by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, and the committee members receive an attendance allowance. The Ministry also covers costs that might result from research and publications.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

To implement the new recommendations made at the 23rd special session of the General Assembly (Beijing +5), the Government adopted a framework strategy and a national action plan on 29 June 2001 to implement equality policy for the period 2001-2005. This new commitment followed on from the 2000 action plan. The Joint Ministerial Committee is responsible for assisting and supervising implementation of the action plan and as such is empowered to propose specific initiatives under it. In this context the Committee pursues the following objectives:

- to raise awareness of the equality issue at all levels of political decision-making;
- to incorporate the principle of equality between women and men in all policies and programmes (mainstreaming of the equality principle as an inter-sectoral approach);
- to disseminate equality policy.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The National Action Plan provides for integrating the equality principle into all political and legislative activities. Through the intermediary of the Joint Ministerial Committee, each ministerial department will be permanently involved in considering and formulating equality policy and will incorporate the specific problems of men and women into its own activities. Before taking any decisions, each department will analyse their consequences for women and men and integrate gender equality issues into policy-making at all levels. The Ministry for the Advancement of Women is undertaking to set up co-operation networks among public and private organisations.

An impact assessment form for legislative and statutory initiatives was introduced in 1998, dealing in particular with their effects on equal opportunities.

In September 2001, members from the Joint Ministerial Committee on equality between women and men participated in a seminar on the integration and transposition of a gender equality perspective in political actions organised by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women.

In the context of the National Action Plan for the implementation of equality between women and men – Beijing + 5 – adopted by government decision of 29 June 2001, the Government reiterates its commitment to:

- include gender mainstreaming and a gender perspective in all policy areas;
- organise positive action and temporary positive measures to establish *de facto* equality between women and men in every sector where sex discrimination is still present.

MALTA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Department for the Equal Status of Women:* In 1989, a Secretariat for the Equal Status of Women was established by Cabinet Decision. It was attached to the Ministry for Social Development. Its objective was to eliminate discrimination and inequalities in the law and in practice, to promote the principles of equality and co-responsibility in all spheres as well as to ensure that women have leadership positions in development. The functions of the Secretariat were very broad: It proposed amendments to discrimination laws, prepared legal and administrative measures aiming at equality, informed the public, worked closely with the media and started to work on the setting-up of a documentation centre etc. Its resources in 1990 were 5 000 MTL, in 1991 and 1992 10 000 MTL and in 1993 33 000 MTL. In 1994, the Secretariat was upgraded to the level of a government department within the portfolio of the Ministry of Social Development. It was thus renamed "Department for the Equal Status of Women". Its objectives remain unchanged. In 1994, the budget was 28 000 MTL, in 1995 48 313 MTL and in 2004 70 000 MTL. There is a need for more qualified personnel.
- *Commission for the Advancement of Women:* This part-time advisory body to the Ministry for Social Development was established in 1989 by Cabinet Decision. It advises the government on the total removal of discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men in every aspect of society, initiates new legislation or amendments to law and promotes the advancement of women as well as the improvement of the national machinery to improve the status of women. The commission does not have a separate budget. It utilised (and still utilises) the budget of the Department.
- *Focal Points on Gender Equality in Government Departments:* Established by Cabinet Decision in 1991, these focal points carry out the mainstreaming of activities on gender equality within government and para-statal organisations. Their objectives are to liaise with the Department for the Equal Status of Women and to act as catalysts in promoting gender equality in the work of their departments. The focal points are provided with regular training on gender issues.

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Department for the Equal Status of Women*: Between October 1996 and September 1998, the Department was placed within the Prime Minister's Office. After a change in the administration resulting from the 1998 General Elections, it was placed within the portfolio of the Ministry of Social Policy.
- *Commission for the Advancement of Women*: Between October 1996 and August 1998, the Commission was placed within the portfolio of the Office of the Prime Minister. In September 1998, it was again placed within the portfolio of the Ministry of Social Policy.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

The Bill on Gender Equality was passed as the Act to Promote Equality for Men and Women which came into force on 9th December 2003. Subsequently in January 2004 the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality for Men and Women (NCPE) was set up as provided for in the said Act. The previous Commission for the Advancement of Women and the Department for Women in Society were amalgamated and transformed into this new Commission. The NCPE is responsible for monitoring compliance, at national level, with the provisions of the Act and to take action (legal if necessary) in cases of discrimination based on sex. The NCPE also promotes the implementation of measures to achieve *de facto* equality in spheres where this may be lacking.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The national action plan for the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of women of Malta covers the years 1997 and 2000. It was elaborated by the *Commission for the Advancement of Women* and adopted by the *Department for the Equal Status of Women*.

The national machinery had the following objectives *before the Beijing Conference*:

- the strengthening of national structures set up in favour of equality between women and men;
- changes in legislation;
- technical and technological teaching and training for women;
- education for life;
- equal opportunities in employment and equality in the workplace;
- health care for women;
- information for women;
- Malta's role in international action plans in favour of the advancement of women.

The following objectives developed as a *result of the Beijing Conference*:

- the integration of equality in every aspect of Maltese life through gender mainstreaming;
- awareness-raising on gender equality of policy-makers, senior civil servants and influential institutions;
- the equal participation of women and men at the decision-making level;
- the creation of a balance between the role of women in the family and at work;
- the elimination of violence against women;
- the alleviation of new forms of poverty resulting from social problems.

At present the National Machinery is implementing its national action plan for 2004 and is drafting its 2005 plans.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

A consultancy programme has been undertaken amongst senior Public Service officials and officials in middle management on the structural and administrative setup necessary to enable the execution of gender impact assessments within their ministries. Officers in middle management have also been trained on how to undertake gender impact assessments, with the organisation of workshops as part of this same initiative, during which these officers planned a number of trial gender impact assessment projects applicable within their specific ministries/sectors.

Partly as a result of this gender impact assessment training project, gender targets have been introduced in the Ministry for Education, Youth and Employment (MEYE) and the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity (MFSS).

The NCPE is coordinating two projects, funded under the ESF, with the aim of increasing the participation of women in the labour market. One project aims to identify the reasons behind the women's low labour market participation as well as the measures necessary to increase it. The other aims to increase awareness amongst women, particularly disadvantaged women², of available work-related training/educational opportunities in order that they may secure a means of financial independence. Both projects involve a series of seminars targeting the social partners (Government, employers and unions) and other stakeholders. The identification of barriers to women's labour market participation and the measures necessary to address this problem should lead to employment policies and working opportunities that are more gender mainstreamed and that, together with a greater awareness of available training/work opportunities, should lead to a greater number of women in employment/the labour market.

² Ex. Single mothers, separated women, women victims of domestic violence, women with no/low educational qualifications.

NETHERLANDS ¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- Minister of Social Affairs and Employment responsible for the co-ordination of emancipation policy.
- *Department for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy*: Established in 1979, this governmental body is attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment since 1981. The Department, which is the key component in the national machinery, works in collaboration with all other ministries and assists the Ministers with his work. Its objective is to ensure that equality aspects are taken into account in all decisions at all levels in the departments. It is responsible for the development of a cohesive equality policy and has also been given the task of initiating, reviewing and co-ordinating policy. It seeks to promote women's economic independence, to increase women's participation in decision-making and to break with traditional images. It also collects information and supervises research in its field.
- *Inter-ministerial Commission for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy*: Established in 1979, this governmental body is under the Presidency of the Department for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy. Constituted by representatives of all ministries, it acts as a direct adviser of the government. Its main objectives are the development of the main lines of the equality policy, to monitor the attention devoted to the aspects of equality regarding any form of governmental policy as well as to control the implementation of departmental equality plans.
- *Permanent Parliamentary Commission for Social Affairs and Employment*: The work of the Permanent Parliamentary Commission on Emancipation Policy was transferred in 1994 to the Permanent Commission for Social Affairs and Employment. Thus, parliament can now assess the equality goals of socio-economic policy more fully.
- *Emancipation Council*: This mixed, independent body was established in 1981 and disbanded in 1997. The Council operated as the official advisory body and a think-tank to the government with regard to equality policy. The Council has played an important role in the evolution of the equality process in general and in the direction and guidance of policy in particular. Its resources were part of the State's budget.
- *Equal Treatment Commission*: In 1994, this mixed, independent body replaced the Equal Treatment (Working Hours) Commission. It monitors the application of the Equal Treatment Act. The Act prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race, sex, nationality, sexual orientation or marital status. The Commission can investigate - either on receipt of a written petition or of its own volition - whether a prohibited distinction has been made. The Commission

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

investigates and decides whether an act is in breach of the Equal Treatment Act. The opinion of the Commission is not binding. The Commission has also acquired the power to make recommendations, together with its opinion, to the person responsible for the discrimination. Its budget is part of the state's budget.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Minister for Social Affairs and Employment*: Since the elections of 2003 the Minister for Social Affairs and Employment is responsible for work, care and the co-ordination of equality policy. Ministries have been implementing their own equality policies for some time now. As a result, the role of the Minister responsible for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy is gradually moving toward monitoring the results of international and external equality policy, stimulating innovative measures and co-ordinating the main lines of the government's nation-wide equality policy. In the light of these developments, the government felt that new instruments were needed. The Interdepartmental Action Plan and Strategy on Gender Mainstreaming is one such instrument.
- *Emancipation Council*: The Emancipation Council was disbanded in 1997, as part of government's fundamental reorganisation of the advisory councils. This was done as part of the mainstreaming exercise to integrate equality aspects into regular policy. The disbanding of the Emancipation Council effected a major change in the equality support structure. The Emancipation Council advised the government on ways of continuing to uphold equality issues after it had been disbanded. On the basis of this advice, the government opted for three main lines of policy to integrate equality policy into the new advisory structure:
 - Provision of advice on equality policy as part of the regular work of all advisory bodies;
 - The government will undertake to appoint sufficient women to regular work of all advisory bodies;
 - Equality policy will be integrated into the new advisory structure.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Temporary Expert Committee (TECENA)*: In 1998, the Temporary Expert Committee (TECENA) was appointed for a maximum period of three years, in order to monitor the incorporation of the gender perspective into the new consultation system, which was set up by the Advisory Bodies Framework Act in 1997. Its task was to ensure that within the new advisory structure, government advisory bodies devote sufficient attention in their recommendations to the equality aspects of the issues under consideration. TECENA's responsibilities were to:
 - Ensure that equality aspects are taken into consideration in all advice requested;
 - Suggest ways in which the advisory bodies can increase knowledge of equality issues among their members;
 - Ensure that efforts are made to find suitable female candidates for appointments of advisory bodies.

TECENA was disbanded in 2001.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

After the Beijing Conference, the government formulated its proposed policy in the policy documents of the various ministries and the action programme "Beijing, now and the future". This view was further elaborated in subsequent years through annual reports on the co-ordination of equality policy, which the government sent to parliament each September together with the general budget. The practical realisation of equality policy has now been taken up in every area of national government. Each ministry has outlined its proposed equality policy in its specific area in a policy document or annual report submitted to parliament.

Since Beijing, the Dutch government has intensified its two-track policy on equality. The first line of approach is to renew equality policy. The second line of approach is to mainstream or integrate equality aspects and insights into regular policy.

Besides, the equality process has moved away from a policy designed to eliminate social disparities, towards a recognition of diversity as a valid characteristic of society. This places equality between women and men in a new light. To implement the Beijing Platform for Action alongside the first line of approach, a multi year plan of action was developed and additional measures have been taken and instruments have been developed to intensify equality policy in the following areas: Paid work, unpaid care and income, redistribution of power and decision-making, human rights of women, preventing and combating violence and trafficking, daily routine in society, education and health, media and image-making as well as sustainable development. Alongside the second line of approach, an Interdepartmental Action Plan and Strategy on Gender Mainstreaming has been developed.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Mainstreaming was already formulated as a policy objective in the Policy Plan for Emancipation of 1985. Since 1988, a multitude of instruments were introduced to put gender mainstreaming into practice. These instruments comprised the establishment of the Inter-ministerial Commission for the Co-ordination on Emancipation Policy, the Permanent Parliamentary Commission of Emancipation Policy and the Department for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy. The co-ordination of equality policy comprised two elements. In the first place, to promote the coherence of policy measures focused specifically on equality objectives that are taken within the sphere of the responsibility of the various Ministers. Secondly, it concerns the integration of the equality perspective in policies that primarily serve other objectives.

Already in 1997, the coalition agreement stated that the Cabinet would conduct a resolute equality policy as an integrated component of its general policy. Since Beijing, the Dutch government has intensified this two-track policy on equality.

The Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) method, which was developed in 1994, has been further applied and evaluated. In the 1998 coalition agreement, it was stated that each ministry must draft a departmental action plan containing at least three specific tasks relating to the implementation and application of equality policy to be carried out during the government's current term in office. The aim of these action plans is to encourage each ministry to exercise individual responsibility for promoting equality in its own area of competence, with a view to gender mainstreaming equality policy.

In September 1999, the Interdepartmental Plan of Action on Gender Mainstreaming was presented to the Lower House of Parliament. It contained a total of 45 tasks relating to different areas of policy. The departments in question have made every effort to ensure that their individual contribution to the plan of action has been elaborated as concretely as possible in terms of measurable objectives and project plans. A report covering the progress of the implementation of the tasks was to be presented annually to the Lower House and the final report was presented in 2001 and followed up by a National Strategy on Gendermainstreaming (2001-2006).

NORWAY¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Minister of Children and Family Affairs* is responsible for Gender Equality: The minister has the co-ordinating responsibility for Government action to promote gender equality, although all ministries are obliged by the Gender Equality Act of 1978 to promote gender equality in all areas of society. Within the Department of Family Affairs, Child Care and Gender Equality, the Unit for Gender Equality was staffed by 9-10 Senior Executives/Advisers in 1995.

The executive unit of the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs is the *Gender Equality Division*, which was established in 1977. In 1994, the division was separated from the Equal Status and Family Division. The division's overall objective was (is) to promote equality between the sexes. It was (is) responsible for the application of the Equal Status Act, co-ordinates actions, formulates and co-ordinates gender policy at State level and monitors the representation of women in committees (40%). In 1990, its budget was 5 million NOK (0.62 million €), in 1991 5.4 million NOK (0.66 million €) and in 1992 5.6 million NOK (0.69 million €).

- *Equal Status Council*: The Council was established in 1972 (1979). It is an independent advisory body, administratively attached to the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. It acts as a liaison body between public authorities, organisations and the public in general. Its major objective is to promote equality in all sectors of society. It suggests to the authorities measures to be taken for the development of society, monitors the implementation of equal status and collects and disseminates gender related information. In 1993, its budget was 2.7 million NOK (0.33 million €).
- *Ombud for Gender Equality*: The Ombud was established in 1979 by the Equal Status Act. It is an independent body, administratively attached to the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. His/Her objective is to ensure the implementation of the Act in collaboration with the Gender Equality Boards of Appeals. The Ombud receives, examines and tries to resolve complaints of sex discrimination in all areas. If no friendly settlement can be achieved between the parties, he/she submits the case to the *Gender Equality Boards of Appeals*. The Board decides disputes, in which a friendly settlement has proved impossible. It also issues orders and injunctions and can impose sanctions in case of non-execution of its own, or the Ombud's, decisions. The budget for 1990 was 5.4 million NOK (0.66 million €), in 1991 5.5 million NOK (0.68 million €), in 1992 6.1 million NOK (0.75 million €) and in 1993 6.2 million NOK (0.76 million €) (incl. budget for Gender Equality Boards of Appeals).
- *Local Gender Equality Committees*: These bodies have been established at municipal level since 1975 in order to promote equality at the municipal level and to serve as a

¹ Last update provided in August 2004.

means of communication between individuals, organisations and the municipalities. Several evaluation studies of these local committees tend to confirm that, with a few exceptions, they tend to be rather marginalised and without much influence. The Municipalities (like other public authorities) are according to the law obliged to promote gender equality in all sectors of society and are (since 2003) obliged to give a corresponding account in their annual budget. But they are free to decide upon how to organise the work. Many municipalities have since 1995 closed down their gender equality committees, which are highly dependent upon the political will to work successfully.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS .

The Department for Family Affairs, Child Care and Gender Equality was reorganised in 2003, with a view *inter alia*, to mainstream gender in all the Department's tasks. The responsibilities of the former Gender Equality Unit are tackled by three smaller teams; on gender based violence, the human rights perspective /equality legislation and gender equality (specific issues). All staff are involved in two different teams but resources allocated to gender-specific issues amount to 10-12 full time staff.

- *Centre for Gender Equality*: In 1997, the Council was transformed into a resource centre for gender equality, called "Centre for Gender Equality". The reorganisation was made to improve and accentuate some of the core functions the Council used to fulfil, with a view to getting a more independent role and to giving advice, promoting public awareness and changing the attitudes of specific target groups such as the media or the municipal authorities. The resource centre functions as a meeting place and as a source of information. It disseminates knowledge by organising seminars and conferences, publishing books and pamphlets, etc. The Centre for Gender Equality is located with the Equality Ombud and with a research information institution "The Source". The budget of the Centre for Gender Equality has increased from 4.5 million NOK (0.6 million €) in 1998 to 5.267 million NOK (0.70 million €) in 2001 and 5.530 million NOK (0.73 million €) in 2002. For 2004 its budget was 6,0 mill NOK. The *Centre for Gender Equality* may apply for additional funding from other Ministries to accommodate further activities and projects.

An evaluation of the Centre in 2003 proposed to strengthen their work with documentation and their role as a Forum/meeting place.

- *Ombud for Equal Status of Women and Men*: The Ombud's budget in 1998 was 4.5 million NOK (0.55 million €), in 2000, 4.5 million NOK (0.55 million €), in 2001 4.830 million NOK (0.64 million €), in 2002, 5.468 million NOK (budget proposal) (0.72 million €). For 2004 its budget was 6,4 mill NOK.
- The number of cases is on the increase, with 254 new cases in 1999, 266 new cases in 2000 and 337 in 2001. In 2002, the number of new cases was 422.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Committee of State Secretaries on Gender Equality* Since 1997, all Governments have set up a Committee of Junior Ministers on Gender Equality. Participation may vary. The current Committee comprises the following Ministries as regular members: Ministry of Children and Family Affairs (chairs the Committee), Ministry of Labour and Administration, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Regional and Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, and the Prime Minister's Office. In addition, other Ministries are invited to participate depending on the issues at hand. The nature of the mandate of the committee is to set a political agenda, to improve the cross-sectoral dialogue and co-operation, and to guide the Government and the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs on issues related to gender equality. The Committee also holds an important function for gender mainstreaming with a view to ensuring that gender equality is considered in Government proposals, and in promoting the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

No action plan as such was set up to implement the Beijing PfA. Before 1995, three different 4-year plans had been implemented. The last two planning periods covered the 12 critical areas of concern as all ministries were involved. After Beijing, the national strategy to follow up Beijing was discussed. All ministries were reminded of their responsibility for gender equality and instructed to use the Beijing PfA as a tool in their work.

Although follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action is linked to the mainstreaming strategy, follow-up to Beijing has also been reviewed by the Committee of Junior Ministers on Gender Equality. Consultation with the women's movement is ensured and annual seminars on follow-up to Beijing are being organised in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and FOKUS, the women's movement umbrella organisation. Among the issues that have become more firmly established on the national agenda since Beijing are violence against women (Action Plan 2001-2003 co-ordinated by the Ministry of Justice), forced marriages (Action Plan 1998-2001 and further follow-up) Female Genital Mutilation (Action Plan 2001-2003). A Norwegian Campaign against Trafficking in Women and Children for sexual exploitation was launched in 2003. The purpose of the present plan is to deal with ethical, social and legal problems connected with trafficking in human beings. The basic strategy for the further promotion of gender equality is the mainstreaming of a gender perspective at ministerial and municipal level. All parts of the central administration are expected to follow up the Beijing Conference in their activities. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs is responsible for co-ordination and accountability.

Gender mainstreaming attracts increasing interest at local and regional levels. Projects have focused on mainstreaming a gender perspective in local and regional planning as a tool for better targeting and user friendliness in service production and delivery. Some municipalities have been successful through networking and project co-operation with other municipalities. To use mainstreaming as a method for planning and implementation of a gender perspective in local and regional planning can be successful when it is followed by political will. "Mainstreaming" as a method for implementation of gender equality can also be an excuse for letting the work down when it lacks political priority.

Efforts to promote gender equality are also an integral part of foreign policy as a whole, and in particular of development co-operation.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The principle of mainstreaming is incorporated in the Norwegian Act on Gender Equality of 1978. It states that public authorities shall promote gender equality in all sectors of society. Early in the 1980's, the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs started systematic and comprehensive work on mainstreaming a gender perspective into the ordinary work of all ministries. Between 1986 and 1994, all ministries implemented two Equality Plans for mainstreaming the gender perspective into their policies, decision-making and executive procedures at all levels and in all policies. This process is still ongoing. Awareness-raising, guidance and regular monitoring were important tools for the programme, as was involvement at political level.

In 1996, a conference on mainstreaming targeted at the State Secretaries from all ministries was held. In 1997, the first reports on how the implementation of gender equality measures was progressing in the individual ministries were produced and subsequently debated in Parliament.

Since 2000, efforts have aimed at establishing a Government gender budget initiative. A pilot project was conducted in the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, with a view to developing methods and instruments for gender budgeting. The pilot was co-ordinated by the Department of Planning and Administration in co-operation with the Unit for Gender Equality. All departments were involved and certain policies/budget chapters were selected for gender assessment and reflection in the budget proposal. The Ministry of Municipal and Regional Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Agriculture operated similar initiatives. For the first time in 2002, the Government's budget proposition for 2003-2004 contained an annex presenting gender based assessments in a number of budget areas. This process is coordinated by the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, and as of 2003, this gender budget initiative included contributions from nearly all ministries. Norway participates in a joint Nordic project (2004-2006) on gender budgeting, which involves the Ministries of Finance / Budget as well as the authorities for gender equality in the five Nordic countries.

On 18 April 2002, Stortinget adopted a revision of the Gender Equality Act that involves, *inter alia*, a strengthening of the existing provision for public authorities to promote gender equality within their own areas of responsibility. Further, all enterprises are obliged to promote gender equality internally among their employees and to report annually on the development of the situation.

Gender mainstreaming attracts increasing interest at local and regional levels. Projects have focused on mainstreaming a gender perspective in local and regional planning, and gender based assessment as a tool for better targeting and user-friendliness in service production and delivery. Guidelines and brochures have been issued, and action plans have been adopted that include concrete goals and measures for action. Regional resource centres for gender equality provide expertise for gender based assessments.

POLAND¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Government Plenipotentiary for Women's and Family Affairs*: This institution was set up in 1991. In 1992, the Plenipotentiary's activities were suspended, but the office and its director continued their work. The Plenipotentiary's activities were resumed in 1995. The Office of the Plenipotentiary supports the government in its efforts and initiatives to promote gender equality, especially with regard to labour law. The Plenipotentiary has the rank of under-secretary of state.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

In 1997 the Government Plenipotentiary for Women's and Family Affairs was replaced by the Government Plenipotentiary for Family affairs responsible for initiating and coordinating the state's family policies. On December 11, 2001, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men was established for the first time by the new government which was set up after the parliamentary elections of September 2001. The Plenipotentiary, in the rank of the Secretary of State, has the following tasks:

- Analysing and evaluating the situation as far as equal status of women and men is concerned, initiating and co-ordinating measures aimed at ensuring an equal gender status in all spheres of social life;
- Drafting action programmes and legal regulations concerning gender equality;
- Inspiration and supporting activities of NGOs aiming at gender equality;
- Cooperation with relevant government and other institutions and NGOs in the field of their educational programmes influencing equal status of women and men.

In 2002 the Government also assigned the Plenipotentiary responsible for combating discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion and beliefs, age and sexual orientation.

The Plenipotentiary is responsible for monitoring and reporting on implementation of the conventions and international agreements to which Poland is bound as well as the recommendations of international organisations concerning women's rights and equal gender status. It can submit suggestions to relevant government institutions to elaborate or change legal acts concerning issues of gender equality. The Plenipotentiary also fulfils its task by spreading knowledge about gender equality issues, especially in the field of the labour market and the education of younger generations and taking measures for solving problems arising from the violation of the equal rights of women and men. The Plenipotentiary also

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

established the Programming and Consulting Council comprising of scientists and representatives of NGOs.

The *Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men* and her Secretary are located in the Prime Minister's Chancellery. Its budget is above 1.8 million PL (about 400 600\$) a year and employs 20 persons.

There is no special committee in the Polish Parliament dealing with the issues of equal status of women and men. The Parliamentary Women's Group founded in 1991 is meant to be the first step to build an institutionalized women's lobby functioning across the division of political nature. Currently, the Group gathers 58 female deputies (out of the total of 93 females) and 17 female senators (out of the total of 23 women in the Senate). For the third time the group has initiated the legislation process for the draft law on equal status, which has now passed on first reading and is being discussed by the parliamentary bodies.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

In the years 2003-2004, Voivod's Plenipotentiaries for Equal Status for Women and Men were appointed in 12 out of 16 Voivodship's Offices (the Government administration on the regional level) as well as in several counties (self-government administration units on the local level). At the same time 11 persons responsible for monitoring the implementation of the principle of gender equality in access to top positions took offices in the central administration (Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Agriculture and the Development of Rural Areas, Ministry of Science and Information Technology, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of State Treasury, Central Statistical Office and Office for European Integration). Thus for the very first time an institutional network for gender equality promotion and strengthening the position of women was created.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Following the Beijing Conference, the National Action Plan for Women (1997-2000) was adopted by the Polish government on 29 April 1997. However, its implementation was practically suspended by the government that came to power at the end of 1997. It carried out its own programme entitled *State Pro-Family Policy* promoting the traditional family model.

The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men undertook work on the second stage of the implementation of the National Action Plan for Women 2003-2005 as one of her first tasks. The Plan was adopted by the Council of Ministers on August 19, 2003.

The second stage of the Plan concerns promoting women's rights in the way stipulated by the Beijing Platform, fulfilling the recommendations of the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly. Its strategic assumption is a comprehensive approach to the solution of women's problems. It comprises many spheres of social life and women's activity and is addressed – first of all – to the authorities as well as to Government and local administration. At the same time, it is based on the pattern of an open social dialogue and cooperation with research institutions, NGOs, local governments, trade unions, and the media. In order to implement the gender mainstreaming principle and monitor the process, focal points were to be set up in government administration offices on the central and regional level.

The second stage of the National Action Plan for Women comprises nine chapters corresponding to different spheres of women's life in the Beijing Platform of Action and in the report "Beijing+5". These are (1) Women's rights as human rights, (2) Economic activity of women, (3) Violence against women, (4) Women's health, (5) Education, (6) Participation of women in public authorities and decision-making, (7) Women and the mass media, (8) Co-operation between state administration and NGOs, (9) Research and data collecting systems strategies.

In each the strategic goals are presented, which – if achieved – would speed up the improvement of women's rights and opportunities in society. Each strategic objective is accompanied by the actions to be taken which determine the scope of proposed changes.

In December 2003, a permanent team of experts monitoring the National Action Plan was set up within the Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary. The team consists of 48 persons. It is composed of representatives of the public administration i.a. State Committee for Scientific Research, Government Centre for Strategic Studies and Central Statistical Office, and also of representatives of NGOs active in the equal status field. The team's task is to establish indicators determining the stage of the National Action Plan implementation and finally to prepare a monitoring report by the end of 2004.

The National Action Plan embraces actions to be taken: acquisition of gender balance in the appointment to the decision-making positions in public administration, the Government and the judicial system. This task includes i.a. the preparation of biannual detailed reports on decision-making appointments with regard to women and men.

Since August 2003 the Plenipotentiary has implemented together with EU partner countries the project *Enhancement of Policies on Equal Treatment of Women and Men* (Denmark and Austria), which includes actions focused on analysing national needs of information, statistic and research on equal treatment of women and men, as well as on discovering the gaps in national statistics with regard to economic, social and political life. Training sessions are held for such professional groups as: specialists on equal treatment and opportunities employed in different political and social services areas; local administration, labour inspectorates, police, judicial system, employment offices, and educational sector. All these efforts will result in the establishment of the national system of monitoring the implementation of equal treatment policy.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

There are no provisions for gender mainstreaming in the legislation. However, the National Action Plan and other activities, like trainings, seminars, brochures, etc. are aimed at institutional preparation for gender mainstreaming.

PORTUGAL¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Commission on the Status of Women*, set up under Legislative Decree no. 485/77 (although already in operation since 1973) and attached to the Prime Minister's Office.
- *Commission for Equality and Women's Rights*: This commission was set up under Legislative Decree no. 166/91 and took over from the Commission on the Status of Women. The instrument setting it up also attached it to the Prime Minister's Office, but from December 1991 to November 1995 it was placed under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

It operates in the same way as a Ministerial Directorate General. It has cross-sectoral prerogatives and works in all fields relevant to equality between men and women.

It endeavours to ensure that men and women have equal opportunities, rights and dignity, promotes effective joint responsibility in all fields of family, working, social, cultural, economic and political life, and encourages society to regard motherhood and fatherhood as social functions and to shoulder the consequent responsibilities.

The Commission conducts and promotes studies on equal opportunities and women's issues, runs a documentation centre and a specialised library, and alerts and trains specific target groups liable to have an impact in the equality field (central and local government staff, municipal staff and persons working in health, the social services, education, the security forces, etc). It also provides public information on a variety of subjects through the media, issues opinions on equal opportunity policies and legislation, evaluates the application of Community Directives and case-law, informs women directly about their rights, runs a helpline for cases of violence, produces publications and co-operates with national and international institutions. It represents the country in the various international organisations.

It has, since its creation in 1977, a Consultative Council with two sections, namely a *Joint Ministerial Section* made up of representatives of governmental administrative departments relevant to the work of the Commission operating as equality consultants, and a *Non-Governmental Organisations Section*, comprising NGOs that have similar objectives to the Commission or endeavour to improve women's living conditions and status or to promote equality.

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Commission for Equality and Women's Rights*: From 1996 to October 1999, the commission operated under the *Office of the High Commissioner for Equality and the Family* (Presidency of the Council of Ministers). Following the October 1999 elections and until October 2000, Portugal had a Minister for Equality, under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. She was in charge of the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights, of the Commission for Equality in the Workplace and of the High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities. From October 2000 to June 2001, following a cabinet reshuffle, the Commission for Equality and Women's rights was placed under the supervision of the Minister of the Presidency. A July 2001 cabinet reshuffle led to the creation of the post of State Secretary for Equality and placed under the control of the Vice Prime Minister. Its aim was to promote equality between women and men. The Commission for Equality and Women's rights and the Commission for Equality in the Workplace were placed under its control. Since the March 2002 elections, the CIDM is waiting for the Prime Minister to designate its responsibility under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Following the elections in March 2002, the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights was attached to the Minister for Relations with the Prime Minister's Office.
- *Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment*: this commission is under the joint supervision of the Minister for Relations with the Prime Minister's Office and the Minister for Social Security and Labour. Given its tripartite nature, the Commission is an organ of dialogue and social consultation. Its most important activities include: issuing opinions that employers are obliged to seek before dismissing a pregnant, newly-delivered or breastfeeding employee and without which such dismissals are deemed null and void; providing information on rights as regards equality, protection of motherhood and fatherhood and reconciling working and family life to employees, employers and any interested organisation; analysing complaints; awareness-raising and training for strategic target audiences; promoting studies; participating in the preparation of laws; participating in the drawing up and implementation of the National employment plan, the National action plan on inclusion and the National plan for equality; managing an Observatory tasked with identifying and preventing direct and indirect sex discrimination in collective agreements; promoting positive action and an equal opportunities culture in companies. The Commission forges contact with institutional bodies at national level, particularly with the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, the Inspectorate General of Labour, the Directorate General on Working Conditions, the Department of Studies and Planning, the Institute for Innovation in Training and the Co-ordinating Commission of the European Social Fund and other institutions such as the Economic and Social Council, the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights, research centres and associations, particularly in the professional sphere, such as those responsible for human resources. The Commission is represented in community and international bodies.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Parliamentary Committee on Parity, Equal Opportunities and the Family*: This committee was set up by the parliament elected on 5 October 1995 with a term of office equivalent to that of the legislature (4 years). Nevertheless, the Committee had been in existence

for several years, either as an autonomous body or as part of the Parliamentary Committee on Rights, Liberties and Guarantees.

From 1995 it worked under the Assembly of the Republic. It endeavoured to analyse and study sectoral policies at the national level, define strategies and policy measures to secure equal opportunities, evaluate the implementation of current legislation in the field of parity and equal opportunities and ensure that it was actually applied. It collected information and opinions, accepted reports/opinions from the general public, requested or proposed specialists and carried out information or research assignments.

This Committee existed until the parliamentary elections of March 2002 when it was dissolved.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The first *Global Plan for Equal Opportunities* was adopted on 6 March 1997, as an integral part of a resolution published in the Government's Official Gazette. The Plan comprised nine comprehensive measures and several sectoral measures aimed at integrating the principle of equal opportunities into all economic, social and cultural policies.

The comprehensive measures included: Providing central and regional government officials and civil servants in the social solidarity institutions and the educational sectors with information on national and Community rules, which the officials are then supposed to pass on to the general public; encouraging the inclusion of equality themes in training courses for central, regional and local authority staff; promoting the incorporation of gender and equality issues into school curricula and initial training courses for persons involved in education and vocational training officers; and providing for gender indicators in the data gathering and recording instruments used by public statistical bodies.

The sectoral measures concern the following fields:

- Violence, including measures to prevent violence and protect female victims of violence;
- Employment and labour relations;
- Reconciling private and working life;
- Social welfare for mothers and families;
- Health;
- Education, science and culture.

Many Ministries were involved in implementing this plan, which was evaluated one year after its launch. A second Global Plan was developed on the basis of this evaluation.

The second National Plan for Equal Opportunities was completed in 2003. It was presented publicly in July 2003 and laid open to public consultation with a view to it being very rapidly submitted to the Council of Ministers. The Commission for Equality and Women's Rights coordinated the preparation of the Plan in close concertation with the ministerial advisers on equality appointed by their respective ministries and assigned to the Consultative Council of the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights and also in collaboration with the Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment.

It takes a dual, integrated approach, combining mainstreaming with the adoption of specific action promoting equality, including positive action.

The Plan comprises two categories of measures:

- *Structural measures*, which are cross-sectoral, target the civil service and commit all the ministries. These are the main prerequisites for the adoption of mainstreaming in all policy areas so that the resulting changes give rise to structural effects. To this end, each ministry is to set up teams representing the different organic units, which will be responsible for promoting mainstreaming, so that the Plan is met and mainstreaming strategy is passed on in the medium- and long-term.
- *Measures grouped by main fields of action*, as defined within the Government's equality programme and arising under the international commitments entered into by Portugal. These measures are to be carried out by the different ministries and equality bodies and focus on four main fields:
 - 1 – Professional activity and family life, including work, employment, protection of motherhood and fatherhood and the reconciling of working and family life.
 - 2 – Education, training and information, including education and training, reproductive and sexual health, culture, sport and social communication.
 - 3 – Citizenship and social integration, including power of decision and decision-making, poverty and social integration, immigrant women and ethnic and cultural minorities, physical violence against women.
 - 4 – Cooperation with countries in the community of Portuguese-speaking countries.

In the area of combating violence against women, the first *National Plan against Domestic Violence* was adopted in May 1999. A free 24-hour helpline was set up, as well as a public network of centres to assist women falling victim to violence; a number of measures were also adopted in the field of trafficking in women.

- The *second National Plan against Domestic Violence* was drawn up and approved by the Council of Ministers under Resolution 88/2003 of 13 June. It provides for concerted measures aimed at information and awareness-raising, training, improvement of legislation, prevention and victim support, to be implemented with the collaboration of the Ministries of Health, Education, Justice, Social Security and Labour, the High Commission for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities and the National Association of Municipalities. The Commission for Equality and Women's Rights is to coordinate the preparation of the Plan in close collaboration with representatives of all the aforementioned bodies.

The *Constitution, as revised on 20 September 1997*, reinforces the equality principle: Article 9 now identifies promoting equality between women and men as one of the State's fundamental responsibilities and explicitly authorises the adoption of positive action measures. It recognises the right of every person, in the framework of the Rights, Liberties and Guarantees, to legal protection against all forms of discrimination (article 26-1), recognises the right for all workers, of either sex, in the framework of their fundamental rights, to organise their work so as to reconcile their professional and family life (article 59-1-b). Its article 109 on the political participation of citizens, states that “the direct and active participation of men and women in political life constitutes the condition and the fundamental instrument to consolidate the democratic system, in line with the law promoting equality in the exercise of civic and political rights and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex in access to political posts”.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The first Global Plan, which was approved by the Council of Ministers on 6 March 1997, primarily meets the concern to implement gender mainstreaming into the various Ministries' policies and activities. The Ministerial Advisers on Equality appointed by their respective ministries have regularly sat on the Consultative Council of the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights since its inception, helping to ensure the implementation of the Action Plan.

The programme adopted by the Government elected on 10 October 1999, comprises two major transversal subjects, one of which is equal opportunities. Gender mainstreaming, which involves integrating equal opportunities between men and women into all sectoral policies, is considered as a mainstay of governmental action.

Measures adopted include: setting up an Observatory for Equality in Collective Bargaining, in order to check on the effective application of current legislation in this field, as well as of other similar policies, and to promote or correct new policies; developing a second Global Equality Plan mentioned above. The Government programme also included measures to combat violence against women (the National Plan against Domestic Violence was adopted in May 1999, a free 24-hour helpline was set up, as well as a public network of centres to assist women victims of violence) and trafficking in women; employment, work and vocational training; health; education and the international field.

THE LOCAL PLAN

The Commission for Equality and Women's Rights has been working since 1997 with local authorities to raise their awareness about the need to adopt this strategy at a local level, to appoint equality advisers and to create equality structures. It trained the advisers appointed by the local authorities and drew up a protocol with the Centre of Studies and Training for Local Authorities to incorporate a gender perspective in the training of local civil servants. Several initiatives have been organised to adopt mainstreaming on a local level. Programmes, methodologies and training resources have been elaborated to train trainers in gender equality issues and to train social workers and other public personalities, such as lawyers and work inspectors. A law was adopted in May 2001 advocating the annual presentation to parliament of a report on the development of equality in the fields of employment, labour and vocational training.

THE 3RD COMMUNITY SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

Positive action measures were included in the Community Support Framework, aiming at achieving equality between women and men; in the Operational Programme "Employment, training and social development" a special measure (4.4) on "equal opportunities for women and men" was created.

This measure aims to promote equality between women and men, both by reinforcing positive action and the adoption of gender mainstreaming in all fields of activity, thus developing global and integrated strategies to promote the balanced participation of women and men in professional life, family life and decision-making, and by creating the conditions to change the paradigm of social roles that are culturally accepted.

The first sub-measure aims to contribute to the definition of policies by supporting studies, inquiries, argumentation, databases and other research and analytical instruments in the

definition of guidelines to make visible the situation of women and men in the labour market, in the framework of reconciling family and professional life, in collective bargaining and in decision-making. This sub-measure is solely destined for equality machinery.

The second sub-measure supports the training and awareness-raising of a strategic public able to contribute to a balanced participation of women and men in the labour market and leading to the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

A third sub-measure attributes prizes to entities promoting equality in the workplace and in the media, including publicity.

The following three sub-measures aim to support enterprises and employers at the level of human resources and work organisation, so that they can promote innovatory solutions and gender equality plans in the enterprise, contributing in particular to the reconciliation of professional and family life. One of these sub-measures aims to stimulate women's capacity to create enterprises, especially in the field of high technology, whereas another aims to combat the horizontal segregation in the labour market by balancing the participation of women and men in those professions where gender segregation is most visible.

The two equality bodies are responsible for giving technical opinions on the projects submitted under these sub-measures.

A last measure aims to support initiatives by non-governmental organisations working in the field of equality between women and men, so as to reinforce possibilities to exercise citizenship, respect human rights and their capacity to participate in all fields of activity. It is planned that the Commission for equality between women and men be responsible for the management, co-ordination, implementation and follow-up of this sub-measure.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE GOVERNMENT

The *Programme of the Government elected on 17 March 2002* states that: "The Government considers that the elimination of discrimination based on sex and the construction of equal rights and opportunities for women and men are of utmost importance to promote and protect human rights and to ensure the quality of democracy." This being so, "the Government will take into account in its action, at all levels and in all domains, the integration of gender mainstreaming, which is today considered to be an indispensable strategy to pursue the goal of equality, in line with the orientations of the Beijing Platform for Action and its future updating." The Government defines the following priority areas for action: labour and employment; reconciliation of professional and family life; combating violence, in particular domestic violence, exploitation of prostitution, trafficking in women and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation; balanced participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels, notably in political and public life; education and awareness-raising by promoting measures that aim to eliminate gender stereotypes and awareness-raising actions aimed at education for equality. All these measures will be covered by the National Action Plan for Equality.

ROMANIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

At the time of the Beijing Conference, there was no national machinery to promote equality between women and men.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

None

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Department for the Promotion of Women's Rights*: This body was set up by governmental decision in October 1995 under the Ministry for Labour and Social Welfare. It is responsible for combating discrimination against women on the labour market and improving their working conditions. It revises legislation in the equality field, concentrating in particular on the rules of principle established by the European Union, conducts research into the status of women in Romania and co-operates with other organisations in identifying solutions to gender parity problems. In March 1999, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was restructured as part of the general reorganisation of central government. The issue of equal opportunities between women and men is now dealt with by the Department for Co-ordination of the Labour Market and Wage Policies. The main aim of the Directorate for Equal Opportunities is to ensure the integration of the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities in all social policies.
- *Department for Welfare Issues relating to Children, Women and the Family*: This department was set up in 1998 under the Ombudsperson's Office.
- *Services dealing with family and women's issues*: Since 1998, services have been introduced into all 41 departments nationwide to address problems affecting women and the family.
- The *Sub-Commission for Equal Opportunities* was established on 7 November 2001. This parliamentary sub-commission is formed by the members of the European Integration Committee and collaborates with parliamentarians from all parties. The sub-commission's main goal is the adoption of the body of EU law in the field of equality and

¹ Based on: Replies to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming; <http://www.un.org/womenwatch>: Follow-up to Beijing: Summaries of the National Action plans; report of the National Conference on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Romania that took place on 6 March 2002.

development programmes and measures to promote gender equality *de facto*. It will develop co-operation with social partners in order to integrate the equality principle in all fields of activity and will collaborate with similar European structures in order to achieve good practices and successful exchanges of experience in this field.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Before the Beijing Conference there were no national or regional action plans to promote equal opportunities between women and men.

In 1996, Romania drew up a National Action Plan to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The Government informally approved the Plan, which had the following priority objectives:

- To create and develop national machinery for co-ordinating policies to promote women's rights and equal opportunities;
- To promote participation by women in the decision-making process;
- To improve the economic situation of women and ensure equal access to the labour market;
- To improve women's health;
- To prevent violence against women and girls;
- To encourage participation by women in environmental protection;
- To incorporate the principle of gender mainstreaming, stressing the role of the media in this field;
- To foster co-operation among governmental bodies, NGOs and international institutions in implementing the National Action Plan.

In January 1999, work began on drafting the *National Plan for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women*. As soon as it has been approved for governmental decision, the Plan will be used by the Inter-ministerial Consultative Committee on Equality between Women and Men. It deals with the following main fields:

- Decision-making process: implementing the principles of equality in governmental and non-governmental structures, promoting the advancement of women in the bodies managing governmental institutions and local public services, and increasing the number of women on electoral rolls;
- Economy: encouraging equal access, integrating women into production/employment cycles, reconciling family and working life, identifying discriminatory legal measures, helping women to set up enterprises and work in rural areas, creating tax incentives, and facilitating access to loans, mobility and re-employment;
- Health: reducing maternal and infant mortality, improving medical units and provision of medicine, ensuring free medication for specific diseases and for underprivileged groups, increasing budget subsidies and identifying alternative financial resources for medical services;
- Violence: studying the causes, revising legislation, developing legal protection and assistance centres, and taking appropriate steps to combat trafficking in women and girls;

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- Environment: promoting participation in the spatial planning field, ensuring training in specific environmental protection activities, informing consumers and setting up databases;
 - Media: combating stereotyping, allocating funds for programmes and highlighting women's achievements;
 - Education: introducing reforms, revising curricula, introducing a non-discriminatory education system and developing educational and vocation guidance.

On 6 March 2002, the *Sub-commission for Equal Opportunities* of the Commission for the European Integration of the Romanian Parliament organised the *National Conference on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Romania*. The aim of this meeting was to make the decision-makers and social partners aware of the importance of the issues of equal opportunities and to actively involve them in promoting the relevant policies.

The main ideas were collected in a *Declaration* adopted during the conference which outlines common actions aimed at implementing equal opportunities. The commitments agreed upon are:

- To act for the elimination of any kind of discrimination on the grounds of sex, and for the elimination of practices, norms and prejudices which favour and perpetuate gender inequalities;
- To get involved actively in the process of modernisation of the society, in securing and guaranteeing a climate of partnership between women and men, for the promotion of non-discriminatory norms and behaviour;
- To join efforts in supporting the laws and policies offering equal chances for both women and men.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The *Inter-ministerial Consultative Committee on Equality between Women and Men* mentioned under question 2 above will be mandated to formulate the main provisions on gender mainstreaming.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Commission for Women, Family and Demography under the President of the Russian Federation:* This commission was established in November 1993, according to a presidential Decree. The commission is a collective advisory body that formulates and co-ordinates government's policy regarding the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. It works on the improvement of women's status, supports families and solves demographic problems in Russia.
- *Committee on Women, Family and Youth of the State Duma:* This committee was established in 1993 by the Lower House of the Federal Assembly (Duma). Its aim is the promotion of legal equality between men and women.
- *Department on Women, Family and Children:* Established in 1992, this department is placed in the Ministry of Social Protection of the Population. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the overall State policy with regard to family relations, social equality for women and the survival and healthy development of children.
- *National Preparatory Council for the Fourth World Conference:* This Council was established according to a government decision from June 1993 within the Ministry of Social Protection of the Population.

In the ministries and other government bodies engaged in the social field there are also structures dealing with women's problems. Another important element of the national machinery to promote equality are conferences. In 1994, two important conferences were held:

- "Women and development: Rights, reality and prospects". This conference was devoted to the discussion of the Federation's preparatory work for the Beijing Conference.
- "Labour, market and unemployment". This congress dealt with typical problems of the social and economic status of women.

¹ Based on: 1994 national CEDAW-report; <http://www.un.org/womenwatch>: Follow-up to Beijing: Summaries of the national action plans; Reply to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming and update provided in 2002.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *The Commission for Women, Family and Demography under the President of the Russian Federation* ceased to exist in 2000.
- *Department on Women, Family and Children*: Since 1996, the Department on Women, Family and Children has been operating in the administrative structure of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Due to organisational reforms in 1999, the department was entrusted with additional responsibilities, particularly in the field of youth policy. Consequently, its name was changed to Department for Family, Women, Children and Youth Affairs. The department liaises with federal government bodies, executive branches of power in the republics, regions, autonomous units, the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg as well as with NGOs.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Round Table of Women's NGOs*: This round table of women's NGOs and non-commercial organisations was created in 1997 under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Its aim is to consolidate the efforts of all participants in social development and to widen the opportunities of social partnership. The round table co-ordinates activities between state bodies and NGOs, promotes women's rights and searches for ways and means for social partnership between state bodies and NGOs. The goal of such a partnership is to create a common data bank on NGO activities and to identify priority interests and possibilities to solve social problems.
- *Interagency Commission on the Status of Women*: This commission was set up in 1996 under the auspices of the federal government. It is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. Its task is to co-ordinate actions of federal authorities as well as to develop and put into practice the strategy for the advancement of women. The commission undertakes all necessary steps to co-ordinate activities of all branches of power and to elaborate proposals on priority tasks of state policy regarding the status of women.
- *Commission on Women's Affairs under the auspices of the Chairman of the Council of the Federation* (the upper Chamber of the Parliament). This Commission was created in 2000. It has been working on numerous tasks, including ways to integrate a gender perspective into the legislative process and to enhance the exchange of best practices in promoting women's rights among the 89 regions (constitutional entities) of the Russian Federation.
- *Section on the Rights of Women and Children in the Executive Apparatus of the Russian Federation Ombudsperson*. This Section was established in 2001. It is entrusted with resolving complaints, communications and petitions from the Russian citizens regarding infringement of the rights of women and children.
- All-Russian conferences on the advancement of women continue to be important elements of the national machinery. They are held on an annual basis.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

A national action plan to improve the status of women in Russia was elaborated and adopted by the government before the Beijing Conference. (December 1994).

In June 2001, the second *National Plan for Action on the Improvement of the Status of Women and the Enhancement of their Role in Society 2001-2005* was approved by government. It foresees the following measures:

- Increasing women's participation in decision-making at all levels;
- Improvement of the status of women in the labour market;
- Development of the system of social services for women;
- Improvement of women's health, creation of conditions to ensure women's reproductive rights and safe motherhood;
- Providing measures to prevent violence against women and to ensure victims protection.

The progress made in the implementation of the National Plan for Action is subject to regular hearings at the sessions of the Interagency Commission on the Status of Women.

On 25 January 2002, the 26th session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women examined the fifth periodic report of the Russian Federation on measures taken to implement the provisions of the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women*. Concluding comments of the Committee are being taken into consideration by the Russian Government as guidelines for further actions and initiatives to promote the rights of women.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

There are some elements of gender mainstreaming in the legislative process

SAN MARINO¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Study Commission for the problems concerning the integration of measures aiming at legal equality of women:* This commission was established in 1976. Its objective is to inquire if there is a lack of legislative measures as regards equality and to study the discrimination still existing in practice. It also has advisory status and the power to present propositions to parliament. Its members are nominated by parliament – nevertheless, the members are not deputies. The commission disposes of sufficient qualified personnel since it relies on the secretariat of parliament. It does not have a separate budget.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

No changes have been made.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

No new mechanisms have been created since the Beijing Conference.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In San Marino, there is no action plan to promote gender equality and the advancement of women.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

There are no provisions for gender mainstreaming.

¹ Based on: Reply to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming.

SLOVAKIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family*: At the time of the Beijing Conference, the ministry was the only institution responsible in the field of women's issues. The Governmental Committee for Women and Family dealing with equality matters since 1990, was abolished after the elections in 1992.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

None

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- From 1996, the *Coordination Committee on Women's Issues*, terminating its work in 2002;
- In 1997, the National Centre for Equality Between Women and Men was set up within a project;
- Since 1998, the *Commission for Women* has been operating at the level of the Confederation of Trade Unions, which is mainly concerned with women's issues related to trade unions;
- In 1999 the *Department for Equal Opportunities* was made part of the structure of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family MoLSAF of the Slovak Republic (SR); its competencies extended in 2003 to include the area of anti-discrimination, whereby the agenda of the department was extended to marginalized groups and national minorities; new name of the department - Department on Equal Opportunities and Antidiscrimination;
- In 2001, a new institute was introduced in the Slovak constitutional system – the public defender of rights (*Ombudsperson*);
- In 2002, the first body for the status of women at parliamentary level was created, the *Commission for Equal Opportunities and the Status of Women* at the NC SR Committee for Human Rights, Nationalities and Status of Women;
- In 2004 in order to ensure law enforceability in the area of equal opportunities, equal treatment and anti-discrimination, it was according the “Antidiscrimination Law” decided, that the *Slovak National Centre for Human Rights* in Bratislava would play the role of supervisory body in gender equality.

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

The Coordination Committee on Women's Issues (CCWI) was established subject to Government resolution No. 7/1996 of 9 January 1996, as advisory, coordination and initiative body of the Government of the SR for issues relating to the status and interests of women in all areas of life. The Committee members included Government officials, Parliament representatives, non-governmental women's organisations, trade unions, municipal authorities, selected central bodies of state administration, research institutions, religions, and experts dealing with the issues of women, families, children and youth. The Committee operated until the end of the Government term in 1998. In the new term, the Committee was transformed into an inter-ministerial expert body in the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, without changing its title, and the chair, again the Minister of Labour. Thereby its status was diminished, a fact which NGOs, in particular, expressed their disagreement and dissatisfaction.

The CCWI was concerned with inequality between women and men in different areas of life. The meetings of the Committee at that time were an important and unique platform for non-governmental organisations to present their views, problems and constructive proposals for the solution of women's issues in the SR and they provided the occasion for genuine dialogue between the Governmental and non-governmental organisations. Within the CCWI expert groups worked on issues of employment, social issues, issues of women in decision-making processes, as well as an expert group for education and research, gender statistics and analyses.

The most important activities and outputs of the CCWI included: monitoring and evaluation of the National Action Plan for Women in the SR, the preparation of the document the "Initial Report of the SR on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women" and its updating in 1998.

The CCWI expert groups prepared reference materials for CCWI deliberations, and the Committee dealt with them within its competencies that could not be overstepped (as advisory, coordination, and initiation body of the SR Government). The CCWI prepared materials and in their context also proposals for solutions of such issues as determining child maintenance allowance, standards for the evaluation of conditions created by employers for the needs of reconciliation of work and family roles of women, organisation of "round tables" on the contribution of women to GDP, questions of teaching ethics, and religion, it prepared the analysis of the Basic Agreement Between the Holy See and the Slovak Republic from gender aspect, etc.

In 1998, the CCWI published the publication "Women and men in Slovakia" in English and Slovak versions, and subsequently, in 2001, "Women and men in Slovakia II". The publications contain the basic indicators monitoring the status of women in the SR.

The Coordination Committee on Women's Issues had limited or minimal decision-making powers (which was the subject of dissatisfaction of NGOs representatives) and the CCWI budget was not adequate for all planned activities. It terminated its activity in 2002. The CCWI agenda was in part taken over by the Department for Equal Opportunities set up in February 1999 within the structure of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. At present discussions are in progress about the future arrangements for the issues of equal opportunities, given the cross-sectional nature and social importance.

Through agreement between the Government of the SR and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), in 1997, the *National Centre for Equality Between Women and Men* was established as an information, documentation, and coordination centre, whose main remit was to establish contacts between foreign and domestic non-governmental organisations. This project ended its activity in 2000.

The Department for Equal Opportunities was set up in February 1999 within the structure of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. This department, in cooperation with other ministry's departments was responsible for equal opportunities for women and men, and in the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence.

The tasks involve in particular:

- in cooperation with legislative department, preparation of drafts of legal regulations, draft principles of the law, ensuring the principle of equal opportunities between women and men in all areas of life and supervising anti-discriminatory provisions in legal regulations;
- preparing conceptual documents, programme documents, draft measures, and initiating ancillary action to improve the situation in the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities, to increase women's participation in political and public life, materials for restructuring partnership in the family on the basis of equality, and promoting the implementation of NGO projects in the area of equal opportunities;
- co-participation in bringing the SR legislation regarding equal opportunities between women and men in line with EU legislation;
- co-ordination in enforcement of the principle of equal opportunities between women and men in all Government policies (gender mainstreaming) on the basis of conventions and recommendations adopted by the United Nations organisation, the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organisation, and other;
- from substantive aspects, contribution to reviewing international conventions, and the preparation of their ratification, and the elaboration of national assessment reports;
- management and control of the performance of state administration;
- undertaking of methodological guidance and provision of expert positions on legal regulations, within the scope of its own competencies;
- cooperation with other ministries and central bodies of state administration, bodies of local state administration and self-government authorities at all levels, the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic, the Federation of Employers Associations and Unions of the Slovak Republic, and non-governmental organisations in enforcing the principle of equal opportunities for women and men and the application of the principle of equal treatment;
- annual evaluation, in cooperation with responsible subjects, of the basic strategic documents: "National action Plan for Women in Slovakia" (information on implementation is given annually to the Government) and the "Concept of Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men" (the evaluation report is given to the Council for Economic and Social Agreement).

In 2003 the competencies of the Department for Equal Opportunities were extended within the structure of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family to include also the area of anti-discrimination. The department's tasks are financed within the budget of the sector and are determined by a budgetary allocation, but the budget does not cover all needed additional activities. The budget for its own activities amounted to 94 000.- SKK (approx. 2356.- EUR) in 2002, 213 000.- SKK in 2003 (approx. 5338.- EUR) and 548 000.- SKK (approx. 13 734.- EUR) in 2004.

In 2002, the first body for the status of women at parliamentary level was created, the *Commission for Equal Opportunities and the Status of Women* at the Parliament's Committee for Human Rights, National Minorities and the Status of Women. A member of the Parliamentary Committee chairs it; its members are recruited from representatives of NGOs operating in the interests of the advancement and empowerment of women in society. The Parliamentary Committee cooperates with the Department for Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination, mainly through the Commission. The Commission has the right to articulate its views on the issues of women, laws, and other questions, which are debated in the Parliament. If the Committee identifies with their comments, they may then be discussed by the Parliament.

The Parliamentary Commission for Equal Opportunities and the Status of Women, as well as the Department for Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination cooperate with NGOs, and experts of the university and research base.

The *Commission for Women* working at the level of the Confederation of Trade Unions is currently refocusing on the issues of equal opportunities between women and men, particularly with regard to employment.

In 2001 a new institute was introduced in the Slovak constitutional system – *the public defender of rights (Ombudsperson)*, whose agenda is not specialised, and who does not have a separate special office for the issues of the protection of women's rights.

In 2004 in order to ensure law enforceability in the area of equal opportunities, equal treatment and anti-discrimination, it was according the "Antidiscrimination Law" decided, that the *Slovak National Centre for Human Rights in Bratislava* would play the role of supervisory body in gender equality.

Two documents, namely the National Action Plan for Women in the SR and the Concept of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men have become the Government's basic documents in the area of women's policy issues and equal opportunities of women and men.

National Action Plan for Women in the SR (hereinafter NAP), as a follow-up to Beijing Platform for Action, was approved by Government Resolution No. 650/1997 of 16 September 1997, as the principal programme document with a view to improving the status of women in the Slovak Republic within the horizon of 10 years. It covers priorities, strategic goals and steps (measures for the solution), which should be implemented by the Government of the SR through the Government-authorised subjects, with a view to creating such conditions which would facilitate development and non-discrimination of both women and men.

The implementing subjects for NAP include state administration bodies, social partners, self-government, research institutions, NGOs, and other interested subjects. NAP contains eight priority areas at which the implementing subjects directed their attention: to implement in practice the legally embedded equal status of the woman in family, employment and society; create possibilities for personal choice in development of life strategies of women in the family, employment and the society; create conditions for the elimination of economic disadvantages which may lead to material hardship of women; shape public opinion to respect equality of men and women; create conditions for protection and promotion of women's health; create conditions for the elimination of violence against women; create conditions for personal development and vocational realisation of women with lesser development chances (such as women living in rural areas, women of Roma ethnic group, unemployed women, women inadequately prepared for their motherly role, women with disabilities); promote the activity of organisations focused on support and development of women at national and international levels.

The latter document to ensure gender equality in Slovak society is the *Concept of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men*, approved by SR Government Resolution No. 232/2001. The concept identifies the tasks for the state and other subjects in areas where gender discrimination manifests itself most markedly and defines 31 measures and recommendations for the implementation, with active participation of non-governmental subjects. The application of equal opportunities in the SR includes the legislative and institutional provision, and particularly, the practical implementation. State bodies, social partners, self-government, research institutions, non-governmental organisations, and other interested subjects cooperate in the implementation of the concept's measures.

Both programme documents of the Government - the National Action Plan for Women and the Concept of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men - are currently **updated and monitored** by the Department for Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination of the MoLSAF SR, which submits annual information to the Government of the SR on the progress achieved.

In November 2004 the government adopted a new and very important document "National Strategy on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and in the family", which is the first governmental document on violence against women. As follow-up to this document the National Action plan on elimination and prevention of violence against women" will be prepared in 2005.

2. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The strategy of gender mainstreaming is still in its initial stage in the SR Individual sectors at present do not have separate expert workers dealing specifically with equal opportunities (so-called Focal points). Mainly through projects, the Department for Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination ensures training and information for state administration and self-government staff on the development and the current trends in gender equality issues.

Despite the fact that the focal points for gender equality and empowerment of women have not been established at relevant ministries, the ministries within their scope of competencies, cooperate in the implementation of measures of the National Action Plan for Women and the Concept of Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men. Equally, a worker has been appointed responsible for the horizontal implementation of the principle of equal opportunities in the European Structural Funds.

The Department for Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination of the MoLSAF SR will continue implementing the project "Introducing equal opportunities in the agenda of regional and local self-government". The objective of the project is to train local government elected officials and the staff in the issues of equal opportunities and acquaint them with the existing institutions for equal opportunities in the EU member states, and the possibilities to introduce gender aspect in all policies, measures and activities, at every level of governance, with special emphasis on the activities' outcome. The means of mainstreaming are also in the main objectives of the Department for Equal Opportunities and Antidiscrimination.

SLOVENIA¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Ombudsperson*: The Ombudsperson officially began work in January 1995 (According to the 1993 Law on the Human Rights Ombudsperson). The institution was formed on the basis of a classic model of a national parliamentary ombudsperson and is an autonomous and independent institution. His/Her task is to identify and prevent violations of human rights and other irregularities arising from the operation of national or local public bodies, and to eliminate their consequences. The jurisdiction of the Ombudsperson includes investigation into cases of alleged violations of specific human rights.
- *Women's Policy Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia*: The office was founded in 1992 as an advisory body (based on the Founding Act of the Women's Policy Office). This central government unit is not attached to any of the existing ministries but it was founded as an independent government service. The Office performs the following tasks:
 - Monitors the position of women and the realisation of the rights ensured by the constitution, laws and international agreements;
 - Assists government in policy making and discusses regulations and measures adopted by the government;
 - Initiates legislation and proposes measures to the government and ministries to promote gender equality;
 - Prepares gender based analyses and reports;
 - Disseminates gender-relevant data and other information on gender equality, including through publications and the media;
 - Works in partnership with local, regional, national and international agencies.

Its operations are financed entirely by the national budget². The office is hindered by insufficient financial and human resources, an unclear mandate, limited authority and a marginalised position in the government structure.

- *Women's Policy Commission*: The Commission was established within the Slovene Assembly in 1990. It monitors the position of women and submits proposals for improving their situation.

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

² In 1995, the budget funds allocated to it were 157 000 USD (remuneration for employees excluded), in 1996 156 844 USD, in 1997 125 511 USD and in the same year an additional 11 765 USD, in 1998 144 700 USD.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Women's Policy Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia*: The personnel of the Policy Office has strengthened its capacity and knowledge regarding gender issues. It has also created more formal links of co-operation with other government ministries and agencies and women's organisations. As regards the budget, see footnote 2.
- *Women's Policy Commission*: After the 1996 elections, the Commission was renamed Equal Opportunities Policy Commission and set up at committee level in the National Assembly. The mandate it had over the previous six years was extended and it was entrusted with greater competencies in dealing with these matters. The Committee consists of ten members³. It performs its tasks in co-operation with independent experts.

1.2.2. CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- The *Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Equal Opportunities*, which was established by government decision on 24 February 2001, will take over the tasks of the *Office for Women's Policy* from 1 July 2002. The Decision on the establishment, organisation and working areas of the Office for Equal Opportunities gave the Office a mandate to perform all the tasks it performed as the Office for Women's Policy. The Office monitors the position of women and the implementation of their rights guaranteed under the constitution, laws and international conventions, participates in the preparation of regulations, acts and measures prepared by ministries and examines draft acts and measures prepared by ministries from a gender equality perspective. It puts forward opinions and proposals on them before they are adopted by the government or ministries, presents initiatives and proposals for measures from its field of work, promotes gender equality by informing, awareness-raising and counselling, examines initiatives by NGOs and represents the government in activities of international and regional organisations to promote gender equality.

The Office for Equal Opportunities performs its tasks in co-operation with ministries and governmental services, local communities, professional and scientific institutions, NGOs, domestic and foreign experts and regional and international organisations.

The staff and financial resources of the office have increased.

After the 2000 national elections the proposal to set up the *Equal Opportunities Policy Commission of the National Assembly* (parliament) was refused, with the argument that there is a need to rationalise working methods and procedures of the legislative power and that a gender equality principle will be integrated in the work of each working body of the Slovene parliament.

After the adoption of the Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (June 2002) coordinators for equal opportunities were appointed in each Ministry and in a number of municipalities. In addition an independent complaint procedure was introduced. It is carried out by the Advocate for Equal Opportunities for women and Men who examines cases of alleged discrimination on the grounds of sex and tries to resolve them.

³ Seven male and three female deputies.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Slovenia has no action plan for the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of women. The main reason for the absence of such a plan is that parallel to the preparation of new laws replacing the legislation of the former SFRJ, Slovenia is also harmonising its legislation with the legal acts of the EU. This dynamic process of forming a new legal order and reforming the social system requires the permanent engagement of the Women's Policy Office in addressing the proposed new acts, measures and programmes. The commitment to implement the Beijing Platform for Action is being realised through ensuring that international norms and standards of gender equality and actions called for in the Platform are used as a basis for all national actions. Slovenia has not adopted an action plan for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action since determined strategies and time-bound targets might act as an obstacle in the process of engendering the dynamic political processes.

The Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (adopted in June 2002) introduced the obligation of the government to prepare the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Parliament to adopt it.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In October 1997, the then *Women's Policy Office* started a pilot project aiming at establishing gender mainstreaming as a standard policy-making strategy at government level. When the project started there was not a clear government "mission statement" which would convey that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of the continuous process leading towards gender equality. The project was based on a contract between the then Women's Policy Office and the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education and Sports and Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. The results of this project clearly showed that there is a lack of knowledge, expertise and will in the three involved sectors and that to make individuals who are involved in policy-development accountable for integrating a gender equality perspective into their work, binding decisions are needed. In this respect the Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (adopted in June 2002) introduced an obligation for the ministries and local communities to promote gender equality by general and special measures and by integrating a gender perspective into planning, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their policies and their management. The government *Office for Equal Opportunities* provides assistance in the development of relevant methods and techniques.

SPAIN¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs:* This Ministry oversees, amongst other things, the proposals regarding the general guidelines laid down by the government in the area of social affairs and carries out their implementation.
- *General Secretariat of Equality Policy:* This body of the aforementioned Ministry is in charge of promoting equal opportunities between women and men, equality in employment and women participation in decision-making process at political and social level.
- *Institute for Women:* Established in 1983, this autonomous body is placed within the governmental structure of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Its objective is to promote conditions favouring equality between men and women before the law and the participation of women in political, cultural, economic and social life. It also constitutes the governmental body aiming at promoting equality related policies. It carries out studies on women's situation in Spain, encourages action to eliminate discrimination, assists the government and co-ordinates the activities of different ministerial departments, other public bodies and NGOs, monitors the application of the law, receives discrimination complaints from women and channels them and gathers and disseminates information through its information and documentation centre. It also upholds relations with equality machineries from different countries as well as with supranational, international and national organisations dealing with women's issues. Its resources consist of state subsidies and finance provided by the EU. Other resources come from financial investments and profits on the account of the institute's activities.

The General Director and Governing Council govern the Institute. The Council's members (representatives from all ministerial departments and other) are appointed on the basis of their accredited personal and professional experience. The Governing Council has, among other functions, the task of co-ordinating the work of the different ministerial departments dealing with women's affairs and the study of the targets established.

- *Institutions in the Autonomous Communities and at local level:* Due to the transfer of powers to the Autonomous Communities, these have established their own equality institutions, being responsible for the implementation of policies relating to women in their geographic areas by virtue of the competencies established by the Spanish Constitution and Statutes of Autonomy. Since 1995, the Sectorial Women Conference carries out the coordination between the equality policies of the different Autonomous Communities. At local level, some Town Councils have created the post of a councillor for women's affairs based on the competencies assigned to them for the promotion of women and the provision of social services. Regarding the cooperation between

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

Administrations at national, regional and local levels, this is guaranteed through Agreements of Collaboration..

- *Mixed Commission Congress-Senate of the Spanish Parliament:* This Commission, in which the parliamentary groups are represented, is a co-ordinating body for the promotion, defence and study of issues related to women's rights.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Institute for Women:* Changes have been made as regards the management of the Institute and the composition of the Governing Council. NGOs working in different fields for the promotion of women's interests, as well as the different ministerial departments, are now represented in the Governing Council. Since 1994, the budget of the Institute has been increased considerably, for the year 2004, the budget of the Institute for Women is 24.3 millions of €, 3.2% higher than last year.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Sectorial Women's Conference:* This body was set up in 1995. It has periodical meetings for coordinating equal opportunities policies between Central Administration and Autonomous Communities.
- *Equal Permanent Observatory:* This body was created in 2000. Its goals are to collect information and define an indicator's system which allow to achieve a valid and reliable diagnostic on advances in equal opportunities between women and men, and consequently, to evaluate the planned policies with this aim. Since 2001, four working groups have been set up regarding employment, education, social exclusion and reconciliation of family life and work.
- *Observatory on Domestic and Gender Violence:* This body was created as a result of an agreement, taken on 26 September 2002, between the Judiciary General Council, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Its main objective is to monitor all the process on domestic violence and sentences issued by the Courts.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Institute for Women promotes measures aimed at helping to eliminate discrimination against women, particularly through the equal opportunities plans. Four Equal Opportunities Acts have been adopted in Spain, covering the periods of 1988-1990, 1993(?) -1995 and 1997-2000 and 2003-2006.

Through its Rectoral Council, the Institute for Women promotes and co-ordinates the plan's measures. The implementation of a Plan is not only a central government matter, the different ministerial departments, within the range of their responsibilities, NGOs, social partners and all equality bodies in autonomous governments, take part in the implementation process as well.

These Plans are based on the commitments set by the Beijing Platform for Action, the guidelines of the 4th Community Action Programme and other international documents. The

major lines of action set by the two last documents are the promotion of gender mainstreaming in all policies and the promotion of women's involvement in all spheres of social life, making them joint partners in decision-making.

The Autonomous Community and local entities, within the range of their competencies, also have their own Equal Opportunities Plans.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Following the commitment of the Governments agreed at the Fourth World Conference on Women, (Beijing 1995), about the implementation of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, the Spanish Third National Plan for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (1997-2000) provided, for the first time, the integration of the gender mainstreaming in every policy.

At present, the Fourth Plan for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (2003-2006) pursues to promote the gender mainstreaming by carrying out positive actions.

This Plan is based on the guidelines set down in the Community Framework Strategy on gender equality (2001-2005).

The main purpose of the plan, which is divided into a number of major areas, is to include gender mainstreaming in public policies. Special attention is given to the following:

- To promote equality between men and women in economic life, in order to bring the gender perspective into employment policies, encourage women to enter the job market and eliminate barriers preventing women from enjoying the same working conditions as men.
- To promote women's participation in decision-making, to involve women in decision making in the political, economic and social spheres, and to foster the professional advancement of women in public administration.
- To improve quality of life for women to promote the equality on fields like health, education or culture, with special emphasis on prevention and eradication of poverty and eliminate the exclusion of women.
- To promote equality in civic life, in particular in the legislative and judicial spheres and policies for combating violence against women.
- To transmit equalitarian values and attitudes, fostering values and practices that promote equality and eliminate stereotypes in the media and advertising.
- To foster the reconciliation of family life and work, including by legislation to make the two more compatible.
- To cooperate with the public administration and public and private institutions, to strength the participation of Spain in international agencies and promote cooperation with the work of NGOs and other institutions, such as the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI).

Given the compromise of the Institute for Women to promote the equality between women and men, the measures established in the abovementioned IV Plan have been transposed to other Plans related to employment, social inclusion or family affairs.

Full member Monitoring Committees of the Operational Programmes of the European Union Structural Funds. The Institute for Women participates in these Committees as the

responsible national body in order to promote equal opportunities. It offers technical assistance with the aim of ensuring that these programmes have as their objectives the creation of employment and the advancement of equal opportunities. In 2002, the Special Group on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men was set up in order to introduce equality of opportunities in all projects co-financed by the structural funds in Spain for the period 2000-2006. The main activities developed during the last year were:

- Elaboration of the Programme of training and education addressed to the personnel in charge of the management of the actions co-financed by the Structural Funds;
- Edition of the Guide to evaluate the actions carried out in the framework of the Structural Funds from the equal opportunities between women and men perspective;
- Publication of the Guide to integrate the gender perspective in the Structural Funds.

The *2nd Integral Plan against domestic violence*. This Plan, as the previous one, includes the principle of mainstreaming, so a gender equality perspective is to be incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making. The actions are articulated in four areas: preventive and public awareness measures, legal and procedural measures, welfare measures and social intervention and research.

The project *Promoting a local system of equality*. This is a project co-financed by the European Social Fund and integrated into the Community Initiative Equal. Its main targets are to boost plans for promoting and encouraging the entry of women in the local labour market and introduce gender mainstreaming into the local system of insertion and employment, in order to reduce gender-based discrimination. In particular, the Institute for Women in partnership with the Institute for Migrations and Social Services and several institutions of the Communities Autonomous of Galicia and Asturias is carrying out initiatives in order to integrate the gender perspective at local level. In particular, it pursues the reconnaissance of the mediation through the role of the Agents for Equality, the improvement of working conditions for women living in rural areas (specially disabled women) and the exchange of best practices at interregional level to improve the efficiency of the implementation of the gender mainstreaming.

The project Optima the "*optimisation of human resources in enterprises*". Since 1996, the Institute for Women has given support, assistance, advice and technical tools to enterprises, in order to introduce equal opportunities and draw up plans of positive actions, which enhance profitable women's contributions to economic growth and social progress.

The *Act 30/2003, 13 October, on measures to integrate a gender impact assessment on regulations issued by the Spanish Government*. According to the agreement reached in the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, "...Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis has to be made of the effects on women and men, respectively" and the commitment of the European Union to promote equality between women and men and eliminate any kind of discrimination against women, on 15 October Act 30/2003, of 13 October, on measures to integrate a gender impact assessment on regulations issued by the Spanish Government entered into force. This Act represents an important step forward in achieving equality between women and men and modifies Act 50/1997 relating to the Government by introducing the obligation of assessing and reporting the impact of draft bills and regulations on women and men (articles 22.2 and 24.1.b)). In this manner, all norms dictated by the government, drafts of law and rules will be adopted taken into account the special needs of women and eliminating any kind of discrimination against them.

SWEDEN¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *The Minister for Gender Equality*: This ministerial post was established by Ministerial Decision in 1976. In 1995, the Deputy Prime Minister was also Minister for Gender Equality and was attached to the Prime Minister's Office. Her objective was to co-ordinate the government policy on equality.
- *Division for Gender Equality*: Established in 1982, this Division is placed within the Government's offices and was in 1995 attached to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. Among its main objectives are to assist the Minister for Gender Equality in co-ordinating the government's policy in this field; initiating training for the Cabinet Office and other government authorities regarding equality between women and men; reviewing written communications from other ministries to Parliament to ensure that a gender perspective has been considered; processing applications for funds for development work and projects within the field and providing information regarding the Government's policy and work for gender equality.
- *Council on Equality Issues*: Established in 1981, this is a forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of current equality issues. The Minister for Gender Equality chairs the Council, which consists of representatives of the political parties and their women's organisations, the social partners and some popular movements. The Council meets four times a year.
- *Equal Opportunities Ombud*: The Ombud was established in 1980 when the Act concerning Equality between Men and Women (generally known as the Equal Opportunities Act) came into force. The primary task of the Ombud is to ensure the application of the Act. The Ombud promotes the voluntary implementation of the Act through information, advice and friendly settlement of disputes, institutes proceedings on behalf of the complainant with the labour tribunal (disputes concerning discrimination are tried out by the Labour Court), informs the public and brings matters before the Equal Opportunities Commission. Since its establishment, the budget of the Ombud has constantly been increased.
- *Equal Opportunities Commission*: This judicial commission was established in 1980 by the Equal Opportunities in Employment Act. In the sphere of labour, it sanctions failure to comply with the Ombud's decisions or obligations imposed by the law. It also has appellate jurisdiction for the Ombud's decisions ordering an employer to provide information on working conditions in the firm.

¹ Based on: 1994 report on national institutional machinery; Reply to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming and update provided in 2002; Fact sheet on national machinery for equality between women and men, March 1999; Fact sheet on gender mainstreaming in Sweden, June 1999; Fact sheet on gender equality initiatives in 2002, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch>: Follow-up to Beijing: Summaries of the national action plans.

- *Regional Experts for Gender Equality:* Since January 1995, an expert on gender equality is to be found at each County Administrative Board. The Expert supports the implementation of the national policy for gender equality at the regional level and promotes and develops the integration of a gender perspective within the various regional policy fields.
- *Officers at local government level:* These officers co-ordinate activities to promote equality within their communities.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *The Government:* A policy for equality between women and men cannot be formulated independently of other policy areas. It affects all parts of society and, therefore, each minister in the Swedish Government is responsible for analysing, following-up, and evaluating the work for gender equality within his or her policy area.
- *Minister for Gender Equality:* The Minister for Gender Equality holds the overall responsibility for coordinating the Government's policy for Equality. The Minister is supported by a State Secretary, Political Advisers, and a special Division for Gender Equality.

The *Division for Gender Equality* is charged, *inter alia*, with:

- Supporting and advancing the work for equality centrally and regionally, and developing methods for the integration and implementation of a gender perspective (gender mainstreaming) in all policy areas.
 - Reviewing, for example, proposals from other ministries regarding bills and written communications etc. to parliament, terms of reference for committees, and members of committees and boards, in order to achieve equal representation of women and men in various organs in the State Sector.
 - Initiating education for the Government Offices regarding equality between women and men.
 - Administering budget and appropriations issues which relate to the Equal Opportunities Ombud and the Equal Opportunities Commission as well as matters concerning the Equal Opportunities Act.
 - Responsibility for co-operation within the EU, Nordic countries and international organisations regarding equality issues.
 - Processing applications for funds for developmental work and projects within this field.
 - Providing information regarding the Government's policy and work for gender equality.
- The *Equal Opportunities Ombud* is charged with the duty of ensuring compliance with the provisions of the *Equal Opportunities Act* (1991:433, as amended up to and including 2000:773) and of parts of the Act concerning the Equal Treatment of Students in Higher Education (2001:1286). The new provisions in the Equality Act on wage discrimination oblige the employers, together with the trade unions, to survey, analyse and take appropriate measures to resolve all discriminatory wage differences. These new provisions should be efficient tools for the social partners to combat pay discrimination.

Since 1 March 2002, the Ombud also has the responsibility of monitoring a new Act concerning the Equal Treatment of Students. It prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex, ethnic background, disability or sexual orientation in universities. Since its establishment the budget of the Ombud has constantly increased.

- The *Swedish National Board for Industrial and Technical Development (NUTEK)* has special programmes on information, training and consultation, aimed at increasing the number of women entrepreneurs.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

The National Mediation Office is a new public authority that was established in 2000. It is charged with providing public statistics and is responsible for ordering the official Swedish wage statistics, disaggregated by sex. It shall also promote an efficient wage formation process and has a specific task to analyse the wage process from a gender perspective.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Government's overall objective in the gender equality field is a society in which women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life, with particular reference to:

- An equal division of power and influence between women and men
- The same opportunities for women and men to achieve financial independence
- Equal terms and conditions for women and men with respect to owning one's own business, work, employment conditions and career development opportunities
- Equal access for girls and boys, women and men to education and the development of personal ambitions, interests and talents
- Shared responsibility for work in the home and with the children
- Freedom from gender-related violence.

The national action plan of Sweden to implement the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted by Parliament in 1997. The issues covered in the Platform correspond to those that form the basis for Sweden's national policy for gender equality. Thus, the issues in the Platform will be relevant for Sweden for a long time to come.

The situation in 2002, with respect to the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action, is as follows:

- Poverty/Development co-operation: Sweden continues to work actively to integrate a gender perspective into its international development co-operation and will act in various ways to promote human rights globally.
- Education: Equal access to education and training as well as equal possibilities to develop personal ambitions, interests and talents is guaranteed. In order to promote efforts to increase the share of female professors, the Government has set a recruitment target for a number of universities. In order to support and boost knowledge and competence levels at schools, the Government has allocated funds for the training of qualified personnel specialising in gender equality and gender studies. The target is at least one trained teacher/expert in each local authority area by the year 2004.

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- Health: Equal treatment and care, as well as social insurance benefits from age 16, including sickness benefits are provided for.
 - Violence: The parliament adopted a Bill for action against violence against women in 1998. The Bill deals with a number of issues and has three essential points of departure: improving existing legislation, launching additional preventive measures and offering women subjected to violence better treatment than hitherto. New legislation was introduced, eg a new offence, gross violation of a woman's integrity, and a new law that prohibits obtaining sexual services for payment (Act prohibiting the purchase of sexual services). The new legislation also has an impact on the phenomenon of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation, since there is now no legal market for buying sexual services. Increased attention is also given to men who commit acts of violence against women, both from the aspect of preventing future violence from those men convicted of violence and of men as perpetrators. The Swedish Government supports men's organisations which are working to combat violence against women.
 - Armed conflicts: Armed conflict is not a feature of life in Sweden. Sweden supports efforts to punish the perpetrators of violence committed against women in armed conflicts.
 - Economy: Labour market participation in 2001 was 79 per cent among women and 84 per cent among men in the age range 20-64. To reduce discrimination against women in the labour market it is crucial to solve the problem of reconciling family and work. In order to break traditional behaviour patterns within the family, the Swedish parliament has decided to increase the flexibility of parental benefits by enabling parents to reduce their working hours in a more flexible way. At the same time the parliament also decided to extend the parental benefit by 30 days commencing January 2002. This means that there will be two so-called father's months in the benefit scheme. The aim is to encourage fathers to take advantage of parental benefits and increase their responsibility in caring for their children. Measures are also taken to counteract the sex segregated labour market and the pay gap between women and men.
 - Power and decision-making: To attain equal distribution of power and influence between women and men the Government maps women's representation every year. Among ordinary members of central Governmental boards, women constitute 46 per cent. The goal is 50 per cent. For Governmental regional boards the figures show that 42 per cent are women. In the boards of the Municipalities and the County Councils the figures are 42 per cent and 48 per cent respectively. The Minister for Gender Equality Affairs has also appointed a reference group consisting of members of senior management from the private sector, to confer on gender equality issues.
 - Human rights: Ensure women world-wide full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The prohibition of purchasing sexual services marks Sweden's attitude towards prostitution: women's bodies are not commercial goods. In 1999 the Government appointed an Ombudsperson against Discrimination on grounds of Sexual Orientation. The Ombudsperson is commissioned to combat discrimination of homosexual and bisexual women and men in working life as well as in all other areas of society. In December 2000, Sweden signed the UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and the supplementing protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children.
 - Media: All forms of Swedish media are independent and cannot be monitored by the Government. There is, however, an ongoing debate in the media concerning equal opportunities between women and men. The Committee on Ethics of the Swedish Enterprise Confederation investigates complaints of sexist advertisements brought to its attention.

- The Girl Child: The Government is undertaking measures to help girls in vulnerable situations in patriarchal families, by legislation, initiatives within the social services and schools, the work of the Swedish Integration Board etc. Integration and gender equality policies are central to efforts to counter the existence of the special kind of oppression experienced by some girls from an immigrant background. The measures are mainly directed at improved protection of the individual and there is also a focus on seeking to change the views of boys and men.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Each Minister is responsible for the promotion of a gender equality perspective in her/his area. The Minister for Gender Equality co-ordinates the work and is responsible for the follow-up and further development of gender policy. Since 1994, the government has declared in its annual Statement of Government Policy its political conviction that a gender equality perspective must permeate all aspects of government policy.

At *central government level*, gender mainstreaming is promoted by the following measures:

- All *official statistics* are to be broken down by gender. Having access to fundamental data on the situation for women and men is one of the conditions of successful gender mainstreaming. To this end, there is now an act of parliament which requires all official individual-based statistics to be broken down by gender unless there are specific reasons not to do so.
- Directive to *committees of ordinances* – all official committees are obliged to analyse their proposals from a gender perspective. These analyses are conditional so that the Government can then assess what effects a reform proposal and other amendments may have on the lives of women and men.
- The gender equality perspective must be considered by the Government in its management of *public administration*. In order to follow up and evaluate how successful the agencies have been regarding gender mainstreaming in their activities, the National Audit Board has scrutinised how gender equality is manifested in the Government's appropriation directions and whether the agencies have given a good enough account of their gender equality efforts in accordance with the Government's directives. The report proposes that gender mainstreaming as a strategy should be placed more in the spotlight.
- Gender perspective in *the budget process* – the annual bill is one of the Government's most important policy documents. In 2002, a project started within the Government Offices aimed at integrating a gender perspective into the budget process. The aim is to show how a link can be established between goals, budgets and statements of operations and to develop a method of following up and evaluating gender equality policy.
- The Division for Gender Equality has run *training programmes* in gender equality for ministers, state secretaries, political advisers and high ranked civil servants. Work is under way to include this programme in government employee induction courses.
- At the end of 1997, the Government appointed a *working group*, whose assignment was to accelerate and facilitate the development of gender equality promotion methods. The working group was headed by the state secretary responsible for gender equality issues and included representatives from public administrations and companies on the central, regional and local levels. The group presented its final report in 2001.

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- *Follow-up and evaluate* the gender perspective in the activities is the obligation of every minister within his or her sphere of responsibility. The Division for Gender Equality Affairs act as a coordinator, adviser and driving-force for gender equality issues throughout the Government offices.

At the *regional level*, the county administrative boards are responsible for coordinating government and municipal services in the counties and ensuring that the decisions of the Government and parliament have the desired effects. Since 1995 there has been an expert for gender equality in each of Sweden's 21 counties. The gender equality expert acts as a resource for the county administrative board executive in its efforts to introduce a gender equality perspective in all branches of operations. For the period 1997-2000, all the county administrative boards drew up strategies for promoting gender equality in their county. The strategies are important instruments and provide a basis for future analyses and assessments of regional efforts in the area of gender equality.

At the *local level*, the work done both by local authorities and county councils in the field of gender equality has been intensified in recent years and now covers not only human resource policy issues but also gender mainstreaming activities. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities has developed the *3R method* in order to facilitate the analysis of local government work from a gender perspective. 3R stands for Representation, Resources and Realia. A 3R analysis should make it possible to answer questions about how power is distributed between women and men, how gender influences the formation of structures and organisational solutions, and how norms are set in terms of gender in the various local government activities. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities is currently endeavouring to disseminate experiences and support the local authorities in their efforts to integrate a gender equality perspective into their activities.

Website address: <http://www.naring.regeringen.se/fragor/jamstalldhet/> Click "In English".

SWITZERLAND¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Federal Commission for Women's Issues*: This extra-parliamentary advisory body was set up in 1976 by decision of the Federal Council. It is part of the Federal Department of the Interior and its secretariat is attached for administrative purposes to the Federal Office of Culture. The 20 members of the Commission are government-appointed and represent political parties, the regions, linguistic communities, women's organisations, employers and employees' organisations (compensation). The Commission's remit is to improve awareness of matters of equality between women and men. It advises the Federal Council and federal departments, submits proposals, gives an opinion on draft legislation, prepares reports and conducts surveys, monitors developments in the situation of women, provides information for the public and maintains a documentation centre. In 1995, the Commission received funding amounting to 175 000 CHF.
- *Federal Office for Equality between Women and Men*: Set up in 1988, this body is attached to the Federal Office of Culture and is thus part of the Federal Department of the Interior. It has seven employees in four posts under a head of section. It is active in a number of areas - employment, law, documentation and public relations - and is mandated to promote equality between women and men. It provides back-up in decision-making, recommends courses of action, gives an opinion on draft legislation, prepares expert reports, advises the authorities and private individuals and educates and informs the public. Its budget in 1995 was 600 000 CHF.

There are also around fifteen *cantonal and municipal offices for equality between women and men*. These and the Federal Office for Equality between Women and Men regularly work together on information and proposals.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Federal Commission for Women's Issues*: Since July 1996, the Commission's secretariat has been attached for administrative purposes to the Federal Office for Equality between Women and Men within the Federal Department of the Interior. Its budget for 2004 is 175 000 CHF (116 000 €). It is currently headed by Ms Chiara Simoneschi-Cortesi.
- *Federal Office for Equality between Women and Men*: under the new federal law on equality between women and men, which entered into force in July 1996, this body was granted far greater autonomy as a federal office, and it now enjoys new powers. The same law authorises the Confederation to award grants to consultative bodies and public

¹ Last update provided in June 2004.

and private organisations for programmes to promote equality between women and men in working life. The Office is responsible for examining applications and overseeing grant awards, as well as monitoring and assessing programme activities. It now employs 17 staff in 12.4 posts in the following areas: grant awards, employment, a legal and international co-operation section, section for action against violence, a documentation centre and public relations. It also heads and/or sits on various working groups (both governmental and non-governmental). Its budget for 2004 is CHF 7 millions (4.7 millions €) of which grants accounted for CHF 4.1 millions (2.7 millions €). The current director is Ms Patricia Schulz.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

At federal level, the department for combating violence has been set up within the Federal Office for Equality between Women and Men. It began its work on 1 May 2003. The department's purpose is to coordinate and support the numerous activities of existing organisations and to group resources, making them more effective

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Federal Office for Equality has been the driving force in preparing the national Plan of Action "Equality between women and men", approved by the Federal Council in 1999. A total of 287 measures have been decided on in collaboration with an inter-departmental working group; NGOs, and particularly Post-Beijing NGO coordination for Switzerland (www.postbeijing.ch), a grouping of women's organisations campaigning for gender equality, have been involved. The working group has produced a report on the federal authorities' implementation of the national plan of action, and this was approved by the Federal Council at the end of 2002. Post-Beijing NGO coordination drew up an alternative report.

The Confederation is developing programmes to promote equal opportunities in vocational apprenticeships, specialised vocational colleges and universities.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Gender mainstreaming is the main priority of the Swiss Plan of Action, which is itself designed to enable those to whom it is addressed (politicians and administrators, public and private institutions, NGOs, employers and unions, training institutes and the media) to put this policy into practice. It has a calendar for achieving its measures in the short, medium and long term. In order to promote gender mainstreaming, it proposes that in-service courses on matters of equality between women and men be devised and offered to women and men in positions of responsibility in politics, economics and the law. In the report on the implementation of the Plan (see above), it can be seen that numerous measures have already been (partially) implemented by the federal authorities. However, gender mainstreaming is not well known yet and its actual implementation varies considerably between departments and offices.

A parliamentary committee recommended that the Swiss government take practical measures to give the federal authorities greater awareness and powers where equality between women and men was concerned. The inter-departmental working group instructed

to tackle this question proposed that gender mainstreaming be introduced, following a pragmatic approach. Five pilot schemes were launched in four departments and the Federal Chancellery to demonstrate, using concrete examples, in what circumstances the equality issue arose and how to respond to it. In June 2004 a leaflet illustrating the gender mainstreaming concept with specific examples was distributed to all federal authority staff. A guide published at the same time uses two practical examples to explain how mainstreaming can be applied in any project.

Generally speaking, statistics are broken down by sex. Important quantitative studies have been conducted into the value of unpaid work and the sex of those by whom it is done. However, there is still insufficient data on violence against women and on time-budget analyses.

“THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA”¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *National Committee*: This committee was established to prepare the national report for the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *National Committee*: The committee was reactivated by the Department for the Promotion of Gender Equality. It is composed of members of government institutions and NGOs. *Inter alia*, its task is to give priority assessments on the proposed projects and to verify their results.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Unit for the Promotion of Gender Equality*: In March 1997 the Unit for Promoting of Gender Equality was established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The basic tasks of the Unit are:
 - to promote the Status of Women according to the International Conventions and Documents ratified by “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”;
 - to initiate and coordinate the activities and issues on gender equality with a clear concept and strategy for overcoming the problems Macedonian women are faced with;
 - to support and cooperate with local Self-Government and NGOs to identify the different interests of women and men, as well as to create and maintain a real and sustainable dialogue with the different groups with specific interest in particular with the female groups from the civil society;
 - cooperation with international organisations.

It participates in the work of specialised bodies (committees/commissions) of international organisations, seeks to follow the development of international human rights law, initiates legislative changes in order to reach full compliance with international documents on gender equality, co-ordinates the implementation of equality projects, prepares reports, prepares working meetings with the competent ministries and other public bodies and organises seminars with NGOs. The department does not have a separate budget – it is financed by the funds allocated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and financial assistance from UNDP.

¹ Last update provided in May 2004.

- The *Ombud* was created to monitor the situation of human rights. The deputy Ombud is a woman, who pays particular attention to women's human rights.

In 2000 *Macedonian Women's Lobby* (MWL) was established as a response to the Gender Task Force (GTF). The MWL is a pressure group lobbying institutions, public and the media. It is an open structure and a coalition of women from different walks of life, including NGOs, political parties, government institutions, local self-government, parliament, trade unions and women experts in different areas and from different national, ethnic, party and religious affiliations.

The Unit for Gender Equality actively participated in the establishment of the MWL and continuously cooperates, creates, initiates and implements activities at all levels in cooperation with the MWL.

- In 2003 *The Club of Women MPs* was created within the Parliament. The objective of this club is to provide logistical support to women parliamentarians, especially when they are dealing with women's issues. The club is a neutral "area", where women parliamentarians, regardless of their political party affiliation, can cooperate and act in a coordinated manner in order to achieve gender balanced participation and create a climate for achieving women rights.
- *The National Office of the Gender Task Force* was also opened in 2003. The goal of this Office is to provide logistical support to the Macedonian Women's Lobby (MWL). Members of the MWL and all those interested in gender equality can access information, support and assistance in preparation of projects etc. This office is open to representatives from government institutions, NGOs, media, international organisations etc.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

During the year 1998, the *Unit for the Promotion of Gender Equality* supported the initiative of the group of Parliamentarians of the Assembly, which adopted the Declaration for developing equality between men and women in the Decision Making Process ("Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 32/98). The same year, under the Consensus Programme, the Unit prepared the comparative review of the regulation on social protection and social insurance from a gender perspective, to achieve harmonisation with the European Union's general instructions. These activities were supported by the European Commission.

In 1999, the Unit and the National Committee in the framework of the Project Strengthening of the National Machinery for Women's Advancement supported by the UNDP Office in Skopje, prepared the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE). This NAPGE was reviewed by the Government in December 1999. The Action Plan identifies the measures necessary to achieve these goals, resulting from the existing gender equality situation in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". The National Action Plan is an instrument of the Government to inform citizens about its priorities and activities on gender equality issues. In this context, it is necessary to point out the initiatives of the Gender Task Force (which began in Sarajevo in 1999), which had a positive influence on the realisation of the priorities of the National Plan of Action for Gender Equality, especially those concerning the strategy for Women in Government and Decision-Making.

The Unit supports all activities to change or supplement the existing laws and regulations on family violence and trafficking in persons, especially women. The Unit is a member of the

working group for combating trafficking in persons coordinated by the Spillover Monitor Mission OSCE Office in Skopje. On the issue of trafficking in persons, the Government established the National Commission for combating the trafficking in persons. The Unit is also a member of the working body of this National Commission as an advisory body.

The Unit is deeply involved in the process of the political empowerment of women in the country, which is one of the priorities of the NAPGE. It strongly supports the NGO projects dealing with this issue and is actively participating in the work of MWL.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The promotion of gender mainstreaming is one of the aims of the national equality policy.

In 2000, the Unit supported the activities of the Statistic Office for the preparation and promotion of a Brochure containing the official statistical data on the *Status of Women and Men in all spheres of public and private life*.

In the part of the *NAPGE* related to the Role of Women in Government and Decision-Making, one of the strategic objectives is to establish a *Committee for Gender Equality* within the Assembly. The task of this Committee is to undertake the necessary steps to improve the regulations concerning the status of women. To establish a *Committee for Gender Equality* within the Assembly, the Unit started preparatory activities in January 2001 to inform and mobilise the relevant stakeholders of the Government: the President of the Assembly, members of the Parliament, women's forums of the Political Parties etc.

These activities are supported and carried out with the financial support of the Austrian Government and in the framework of the Stability Pact Gender Task Force.

In the framework of the Project New Strategy for Gender Equality, financially supported by the Austrian Government in co-operation with the Council of Europe under the Stability Pact, the Unit formed a working group of 8 members, which had to prepare a draft paper for supplementing the national and local electoral regulation to stimulate more women candidates on the electoral lists during the elections.

In the year 2001-2002, the OUPR in cooperation with the UNDP and the Open Society Institute organised a series of seminars in three regional centres (Struga, Gevgelija and Kumanovo) for representatives of local self-government. As part of the strategic goal of the NPAGE, these seminars were aimed at raising awareness on equality between women and men and the need to incorporate a gender perspective in local policy, as well as to establish Committees on Gender Equality in municipal councils in local self-government. The OUPR in cooperation with the SOZM (The Federation of Women of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) during this period implemented the project "Greater Representation of Women in Local Self-Government." A number of seminars were organised for the mayors, councillors and local administration with a view to establishing inter-active cooperation while promoting gender equality.

- 2003-2004: The MWL is present in 10 different cities through out the country. The MWL represents an additional mechanism or instrument that can be used to achieve gender equality.
- 2002-2003: Six Committees on Gender Equality were established in Municipal Councils and an Action Plan on gender equality was prepared.

The Committees on Gender Equality were established in compliance with the governing Municipal Statutes. The members in these Committees are representatives from different political parties, NGOs and local administration. The Committee's task is to review issues concerning citizens' needs. They also initiate resolutions and make proposals for resolving problems taking into account the gender equality concept. The Committees also take part in the creation of the Work Programs for the Municipal Councils and cooperate with the OUPR, local NGOs and international organisations.

Despite the significant election results of September 2000 and the establishment of the six Committees on gender equality women's representation and their participation in local administration is not sufficient. The conclusions and the recommendations of the seminars highlighted the necessity for further strengthening of the position of women in Local Self-Government.

TURKEY¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women (DGSPW)*: This government body was set up by law (3670) in 1990. Initially placed under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, it was attached to the Prime Minister's Office in 1991, executing its functions under the responsibility of a State Minister. The Directorate consists of 4 departments, namely Educational and Social Affairs, Economical Affairs, Documentation Publishing and Statistics and Foreign Affairs and two units that provide support services. Additionally, a particular division entitled "3B (Information Inquiry Bank)" which was formed in 1994 for women who are confronted with domestic violence and for women who want to explore marketing facilities for their hand made products. Women can also get free counselling services from this unit. The Directorate's objective is to ensure women's access to education and training, to enhance their contribution in various economic fields, to ensure social and sickness cover and to help women acquire a better status and equality. It initiates reforms, carries out research and publications, co-ordinates the work of various bodies, monitors actions in the regions and gives financial support to a number of organisations. Its resources from the national budget amounted to 169.700 million TRL (132 521 €) in 1998 and to 673 billion TRL (603 678 €) in 2002.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women*: As a follow-up to the Beijing Conference, specialised commissions on Health, Education, Employment and Law were established in 1997 in order to incorporate NGOs' views into the present and future activities of the Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women and other relevant government bodies. These commissions consist of representatives from women's NGOs. The secretarial work of the commissions is carried out by the Directorate General.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Gender Focal Points*: The State Ministry responsible for Women's Affairs and the DGSPW has established policy dialogue with all relevant ministries in order to translate policy statements into concrete policies. One of the substantive outcomes in this area of work has been the effort to establish gender focal points at the governors' offices within the context of ensuring a decentralised structure. 14 gender focal points have been

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

established at provincial level, under the governors' offices. These focal points have started to serve as centres for dissemination of information on services provided.

- *Ad Hoc Committee on Gender Discrimination:* This Committee was formed in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The committee completed its work in July 1998 and made crucial recommendations such as the withdrawal of reservations to CEDAW as well as the establishment of a Parliamentary Standing Commission on Gender Equality. The effort to establish this Commission is also another gender mainstreaming strategy. Its goal is to ensure gender equality at all levels through legislative means and executive action.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The Turkish National Plan of Action for the implementation of the Beijing Conference was formulated by the specialised commission made up of the representatives of women's NGOs, gender studies centres of universities, academic experts and relevant state institutions. An inter-ministerial council was established, in which non-governmental organisations, representatives of ministries and different government departments participated.

The following actions have been taken relating to the commitments made by Turkey in Beijing:

Legislation: The Civil Code has been amended to take a gender perspective into account. The adoption of the new Turkish Civil Code on 22 November 2001 is the most notable progress in expanding the boundaries of equality between women and men. The new law eliminates discriminatory clauses in line with articles 15 and 16 of CEDAW. Just to cite a few examples, the concept of "head of the conjugal union" is dropped from the new law, minimum age of marriage is raised and equalised for both sexes, and an egalitarian matrimonial property regime is introduced. The new property regime recognises the unpaid work of women at home by laying down the provision that added value of all property acquired during marriage shall be shared equally in the case of divorce. Now the national machinery for women's affairs is actively disseminating information about the new law and sponsoring nation-wide debates to ensure that women become informed of their new rights and other actors in society become sensitised to these changes.

In order to improve equality, the Family Courts were established in 2003 and the Turkish Criminal Code was amended in 2004. The new Criminal Code will enter into force in April 2005.

Education: Compulsory basic education has been extended from 5 to 8 years with the aim of increasing enrolment levels of the girl-child and also to facilitate the activities which aim at increasing literacy among women. Consequently, literacy rate by the year 1998 increased to 75 per cent. In order to provide more efficient results a project entitled "Keeping up with modern times in Education: 2000" is being carried out. The policies of the project have significant importance especially from the female students' perspective. In the rural areas, where there is no opportunity for education of female students, transportation and boarding schools are provided as a result of the project and an estimated number of 100,000 female students benefit from these measures.

Health: To pave the way to reducing maternal and infant mortality rates by at least half by the year 2000, the National Strategic Action Plan and an Action Plan were formulated and implemented. The rate of infant mortality was reduced to 0.43% between the years 1993-1998 and maternal mortality rate was reduced to 0.10%. A “National Action Plan for Women’s Health and Family Planning” was prepared as a result of a workshop with the attendance of NGOs, private sector, labour unions and government bodies in 1998.

Violence: A new law was enacted in 1998 in order to protect the family members who are victimised until an official divorce takes place. In several cities 8 women’s guest houses were established. As educational material 6 films and 1 short film were funded by DGSPW.

Turkey attracts international funds for gender equality projects in the already very competitive process for funds mobilisation. Over the 1992-1998 period approximately US\$ 2.750.000 were mobilised from international technical co-operation agencies, such as UNDP, the Japanese Grant Funds and the World Bank for specific projects. Among these, partnership with UNDP since the early 1990s has made a significant contribution to enhance the various programmes of the Directorate. Recently, a new project was started with UNFPA entitled ‘advocacy programme on reproductive health and gender equality’ with a total of US\$1,000,000. Currently DGSPW is working on several project proposals within the framework of the Council of Europe and the EU. All proposals focus on women’s human rights.

The reservations to CEDAW were withdrawn in September 1999.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Mainstreaming the gender perspective in all policies, plans, programmes has been an ongoing process in Turkey. In its efforts to mainstream gender equality, with an agenda-setting approach and devising strategies to make institutions more receptive to and accountable for gender equality, Turkey employs a universal understanding, which is also sensitive to the national and local context.

A two-level approach to gender mainstreaming was taken by Turkey:

INSTITUTIONALISATION

In 1997, a gender mainstreaming concept was incorporated into the government programme for the first time. The paragraph concerned stated that “a gender perspective should be mainstreamed into all policy areas and programmes”.

The State Ministry for Women’s Affairs and the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women (DGSPW) established a policy dialogue with the relevant ministries to create a gender equality unit in their respective ministries. Within this framework, only one unit has been established so far under the Ministry of Agriculture, but the dialogue is ongoing. In addition, the unit established in 1993 at the State Institute of Statistics (SIS) serves a similar purpose but in a different fashion. This unit is responsible for compiling, producing and disseminating gender-segregated data.

Under the strategy of establishing a policy dialogue with the relevant institutions and public offices, governors were contacted and gender focal points (gender equality units) established under the governors’ offices in 14 provinces.

The establishment of 14 women's studies programmes and research centres in different universities has helped gender mainstreaming efforts to a great extent through providing training for public officials including judges, prosecutors, police officers and medical doctors.

DGSPW submitted a draft proposal to Parliament, which was initiated by an NGO (KA-DER: Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates), to establish a standing committee on gender equality at Parliamentary level.

The amended legislation of the DGSPW, which is to be ratified by Parliament, contains a provision to establish a high co-ordination committee (interdepartmental) with a priority mandate for gender mainstreaming.

LEGAL TOOLS

The Civil Code has been amended to take into account the gender perspective. The demands of the women's movement and NGOs are incorporated in the new draft.

The enactment of an Equality Act is planned in Turkey and with this in mind a seminar sponsored by the Council of Europe and KA-DER, KASAUM (Ankara University Women's Studies and Research Centre) and the DGSPW has been held.

UKRAINE¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Committee for Women's Affairs, Motherhood and Childhood*: This committee was set up in 1995 under the President of Ukraine. Its goal is to study the social status of women and to develop propositions regarding its improvement, to protect the interests of family and children at government level and to introduce the best Ukrainian and international experience in the sphere of legal and social protection of women, family planning, mother and child protection, co-operation with international organisations etc. The committee does not have a separate budget.
- *Commissions on Issues of Health Care, Mother and Child Protection/ Sub-commission on Enforcement of Rights of Women, Family and Children*: These bodies were added to the standing Commission on Issues of Human Rights, National Minorities and International Relations acted at the Supreme Rada (National Assembly) of Ukraine. The commission was set up in 1990. Its resources were part of the State's budget. In 1994, the functions of the commission were transferred to the specially created Sub-committee on Female Status, Family and Childhood which is also attached to the standing Commission on Issues of Human Rights, National Minorities and International Relations. The sub-committee is particularly aiming at an improvement of maternity medical treatment and female labour protection.
- *Sector for Women's Affairs, Family, Mother and Child Protection*: This sector was set up in 1993 and is attached to the Cabinet of Ministers. In collaboration with other ministries as well as scientists and public associations, it developed measures to ensure social and legal guarantees for women's equal opportunities in the sphere of labour and social protection. One of its major aims was to increase the prestige of the family in society and to improve measures directed to support families. The sector does not have a separate budget.
- *Ministerial Departments*: The Ministries of Labour, Public Health and the Ministry of Social Protection established departments between 1992 and 1995 that also address issues regarding the improvement of the status of women. These Departments deal with assistance for children and mothers, family planning, social protection and guarantees for women and children etc. They do not have a separate budget - their budgets are part of the ministries' budgets.
- *National Organising Committee for the Preparation of the Beijing Conference*: In 1993, this committee was set up under the Cabinet of Ministers. It consisted of ministers, deputy ministers, heads of subdivisions and department employees of the Cabinet of Ministers, members of the commissions, scientists and members of NGOs. The

¹ Based on: Replies to 1999 questionnaire on national machinery, action plans and gender mainstreaming and information provided in 2002.

committee analysed the status of women and children and developed measures to improve it.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Committee for Women's Affairs, Motherhood and Childhood*: In 1996, the committee terminated its work due to the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Youth.

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Ministry for Family and Youth/State Committee for Family and Youth*: This ministry was founded in 1996. Its objective is to create a common strategy of state policy as regards the female status in family and public life as well as the establishment of equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of social life. In March 1999, it was transformed into the State Committee for Family and Youth, which includes a Department of Family Affairs and Gender Equality. In 1999, the budget of the committee only covers about 60% of its needs.
- *Female Relationship Regulatory Body (1997) and the Council of Equal Opportunities/Gender Council (1998)*: These bodies were established under the Ministry (at the present State Committee) for Family and Youth. They provide linkage with governmental authorities and public institutions in order to resolve problems regarding women's and family matters. The main tasks of the Gender Council, which operates as an analytical, consultative and advisory body attached to the Ministry, are to provide gender examination of the national legislation and draft laws, to put forward proposals concerning changes and amendments to laws which run counter to the principle of gender equality, to participate in the process of forming gender policy, etc. The personnel is qualified. It consists of specialists in different fields, scientists, representatives of ministries and other central bodies of executive power as well as public structures.
- The *State Committee for Family and Youth* has been adopted by presidential decree (No. 1132, 22 November 2001).

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

In 1997, the "National Plan of Action on Women's Status in Ukraine and the Improvement of their Role in Society during 1997-2000" was adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers. It focuses on the:

- Establishment of an effective judicial system to protect women's rights;
- Improvement of women's competitive abilities on the labour market;
- Creation of conditions for safe maternity;
- Enlargement of female participation in policy-, economy- and decision-making within all power structures;
- Prevention of violence against women.

In March 1999, the Declaration on General Provisions of State Policy regarding Family and Women was approved by Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. It determines the main principles, directions and approaches to problems concerning family and women.

In September 1999, the “Comprehensive National Programme on Prevention and Struggle against Trafficking in Women and Children” was adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers.

A number of other programmes were adopted in recent years in order to enhance women’s status in Ukraine, such as the national programme “Family Planning” and “Children of Ukraine” etc.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The principle of equal rights between men and women is ensured by the Constitution of Ukraine as well as other legal regulations (such as the Code on Marriage and Family, the Labour Code, the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Civil Code, the Code of Administrative Violations, the Law on Employment etc.).

The Constitution determines an ideology and state policy concerning women’s status as well as their opportunities to influence economic and political processes taking place in society. Equal constitutional rights and freedoms for women and men and their equality before the law are legally enforced. Clause 24 of the Constitution also provides that equality of rights is ensured by providing women with equal opportunities as regards public, political and cultural activities, education and professional training as well as work and its remuneration; by special measures for the protection of work and health of women; by establishing pension privileges; by creating conditions that allow women to combine work and motherhood; by legal protection, material and moral support of motherhood and childhood, including the provision of paid leave and other privileges to pregnant women and mothers.

UNITED KINGDOM¹

1. NATIONAL MACHINERY

1.1 SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

- *Equal Opportunities Commission*: Established in 1975, this mixed independent body is attached to the Department of State for Employment. Its objective is the elimination of all discrimination, to promote equal opportunities for women and men in general, to monitor the application of the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act and to prepare proposals to amendments of law for the Secretary of State. It undertakes formal investigations, assists complainants, carries out research and promotional activities, disseminates publications and collaborates with trade unions, employers and other organisations. The state subsidy for 1993/1994 amounted to £5.794 million (9,033,468 €).
- *Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland*: This mixed non-departmental body was set up in 1976. The institution includes several committees and thematic groups. Its objective is the elimination of all discrimination, to promote equal opportunities for women and men in general, to monitor the application of the 1976 Sex Discrimination Order (Northern Ireland) and the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and to prepare proposals to amend these legal provisions for the Department of Economic Development. It assists complainants, initiates formal investigations and works with the employers and trade unions to encourage the voluntary implementation of the legislation relating to sex discrimination and equal treatment. The state subsidy for 1992/1993 amounted to £1,252,002 (1,951,686 €).
- *Women's National Commission*: This mixed independent advisory body was established in 1969. It is attached to the Department of State for Employment. Its objective is that the viewpoint of women's organisations is heard and taken into account by the government. It organises seminars, publishes documents, submits reports to the Ministers and monitors international developments concerning women. Its resources in 1994/1995 were £257,500 (401,357 €).
- *Ministerial Sub-committee on Women's Issues*: Established in 1992, this sub-committee is attached to the Cabinet of Government. Its members are the ministers of the main government departments. It is chaired by the Secretary of State for Employment. Its objective is to monitor and develop the government's policy on women's issues and to watch over their implementation. It co-ordinates government policies across departments. It does not have a separate budget.
- *Working Party on Women's Issues*: This advisory group with the Secretary of State for Employment was established in 1992. Its objective is to advise the Secretary of State on questions relating to women at the workplace and beyond and to draw his attention to

¹ Last update provided in November 2004.

questions concerning women when formulating government policies. Its resources in 1993 were £4,000 (6,234 €).

- *Secretary of State for Employment*: In 1992, the responsibility for co-ordinating policies and strategies concerning women was transferred to the Secretary of State for Employment.

1.2 SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

1.2.1 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

- *Equal Opportunities Commission*: the state subsidy for 2000-2001 is £ 8.686 million.
- *Northern Ireland*: The Gender Policy Unit which is part of the Equality Division of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister was established to promote gender equality throughout the work of the Northern Ireland Executive. Its remit covers women and men, people of differing sexual orientation, people with and without dependants and people of differing marital status.
- *Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland*: The Commission came into being on 1 October 1999. It has responsibility for the functions previously exercised by the former Equal Opportunities Commission (NI), Fair Employment Commission and Commission for Racial Equality (NI). The Commission also has similar functions in relation to disability discrimination and carries responsibility for enforcing the statutory duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity in carrying out their functions in Northern Ireland. The Commission has an annual budget of £6.8 million (11,121,190 €) and a staff complement of 143.
- *Women's National Commission (WNC)*: The number of member organisations was raised between 1999 (over 100) to 2002 (over 220). In 1997, the WNC was transferred from the Department for Education and Employment to the Department for Social Security and then in 1998 to the Cabinet Office. The funds allocated to the WNC in 2001/2002 were £305,000 (498,845 €).
- *Scotland*: There is no separate Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) in Scotland. The EOC is a Great Britain wide body as the Sex Discrimination Act (and all other discrimination laws) are reserved matters. There is a Scottish office of the EOC but it is part of the GB body and therefore does not merit a separate entry in the way the Northern Ireland Equality Commission does.
- *Ministerial Sub-committee on Women's Issues*: At the direction of the Prime Minister in 2001, the Ministerial Committee on Women's Issues was replaced by the *Ministerial Sub-Committee on Equality (DA(EQ))*. This Committee is chaired by the Deputy Minister for Women and Equality and has been constituted with the following terms of reference: "To co-ordinate the Government's policies on equality issues and to report as necessary to the Committee on Domestic Affairs".

1.2.2 CREATION OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

- *Scotland*: The *Scottish Parliament* was established in 1999. One of its founding principles is equal opportunities for all. The parliament has established an equal opportunities committee with one of its members appointed as the gender reporter. The *Scottish Executive Equality Unit* was established in 1999 to mainstream equality issues

across the work of the Scottish Executive. The Unit reports to the Minister and the Deputy Minister for Social Justice. The mainstreaming strategy of the Scottish Executive was set out in the *Equality Strategy: Working Together for Equality*, published in November 2000. A preliminary report on the equality strategy was published in 2001. It sets out policies targeted at promoting equal opportunities for women and for other equality groups.

- *The Women and Equality Unit (formerly Women's Unit)*: Established in 1997, this central policy co-ordination unit is now placed in the Department of Trade and Industry and has specific responsibility for gender equality and equality in relation to sexual orientation. The Unit's role is to lead the Government towards reducing and removing barriers to *opportunity for all* in key areas by:
 - bringing about measurable improvements in the position of women which benefit society generally;
 - integrating gender equality into government policies to increase opportunity for all, and
 - taking the lead in shaping relations between civil institutions and citizens with a view to increasing respect for people regardless of sexual orientation and tackling discrimination on these grounds

Its resources in 2001/2002 were £2.8 million (4,578,098 €). Please note that the £2.8m figure does not include EOC funding (approx. £8.6 million (14,060,152 €) in this period.

Ministers for Women: There are now two Ministers for Women and Equality – at Cabinet level, Patricia Hewitt MP, who is Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Minister for Women; and Jacqui Smith MP, Minister of State for Industry and the Regions and Deputy Minister for Women and Equality.

Further institutional mechanisms are evolving following the creation of the devolved administration in Scotland and Wales.

2. HAVE ANY ACTION PLANS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN BEEN SET UP SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

The UK Government's agenda for women is carried out under the banner *Better for Women, Better for All*. This reflects the commitment not to marginalise women's interests and concerns and to recognise that progress for women is progress for the whole of society. The agenda for women also reflects the gender mainstreaming approach.

For the year 1999/2000, the practical programme of action to deliver these aims includes:

- A major *Listening to Women* exercise consisting of a qualitative research programme (ministerial road-shows, "talkback" postcard campaign etc.) elicited views from women of all kinds, which were published in the magazine format, *Voices*. The priorities identified in the exercise now form the basis of the Government programme;

- Four focused projects, designed to address crosscutting issues of particular concern to women who do not fall within the remit of any single Government department and have therefore been neglected in the past. These are:
 - Violence against women;
 - Family friendly employment;
 - Women's incomes over a lifetime;
 - Teenage girls;
- A *mainstreaming* programme designed to:
 - Feed the women's perspective into other cross-cutting Government initiatives, under the banner of *Better Government for Women*;
 - Inject the women's perspective into policy initiatives being carried out right across the spectrum of Government activity to deliver practical benefits for women;
- A research programme, to provide authority and credibility.

3. HAVE ANY PROVISIONS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING BEEN INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE?

Official advice on policy appraisal for equal treatment is provided in the guidance issued jointly by the Cabinet Office, Department for Education and Employment and Home Office in November 1998.

The women's perspective is included in guidance for departments on the Modernising Government initiative, departmental annual reports, review of agencies and in guidance on public service agreements.

The mainstreaming approach is already beginning to have an impact with a number of Government initiatives now reflecting more clearly women's needs.

DELIVERING ON GENDER EQUALITY - SUPPORTING THE PSA (PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT) OBJECTIVE ON GENDER EQUALITY 2003-2006

(June 2003)

The Women and Equality Unit is promoting gender equality across Government through the development and monitoring of the report, *Delivering on Gender Equality*, to support the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Gender Equality PSA objective 9. *Delivering on Gender Equality* sets out specific targets and initiatives across Government, which the Ministers for Women believe are key to delivering improvements in gender equality. These targets cover the key delivery departments and the key government priorities for action: including employment, pay, flexible working, childcare, and fear of crime. *Delivering on Gender Equality* also sets out the broader context of work going on right across Government to make a positive impact on gender equality.

(Also see 2)

Full details of the work of the Women and Equality Unit can be viewed at the website: <http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk>

CONCLUSION

The present comparative study issued by the Council of Europe on national machinery established in its member States aims at providing a broad overview of the structures set up in the different member States. The objective is also to take stock of:

- the evolution in this field since the Beijing Conference in 1995;
- action plans having been set up and carried out by governments since the Beijing Conference;
- progress made with introducing and implementing gender mainstreaming.

Some interesting conclusions may be drawn from the information provided in this document.

The most obvious is the positive influence that the Beijing Conference and its preparatory process have had on equality policies in the member States. It gave the question of equality between women and men increased political importance, and thus an excellent opportunity to set up bodies/institutions in those countries where no machinery existed at that time. During the preparatory process or just after the Beijing Conference, national/interministerial equality committees were established in many countries. These have sometimes evolved into institutional machinery. In the countries where national machinery already existed, this was sometimes changed or adapted to new circumstances.

This momentum did not, however, always result in the longer term in meaningful and active policies to promote equality. Most countries, especially those which created their first equality machinery at the time of or in the wake of the Beijing Conference, complain that they lack adequate financial and human resources to make them function properly. The lack of qualified human resources is often mentioned, and there are contributions which state that no funding comes from governmental sources and that the machinery has to rely on external funding such as that of the UNDP. This indicates that equality between women and men is still not considered, in a number of member States, as an issue of importance. Other problems of such institutions are that they often have an unclear mandate, limited authority and a marginalised position in the government structure. All this means that they have little influence.

In countries where national institutional machinery has existed for a longer time, it has, as a rule, clearly more political significance and legitimacy, and some contributions state that staff and budget have been on the increase.

The national institutional machinery's main function is still to promote equal opportunities legislation, anti-discrimination law(s) and to monitor their implementation. They are principally linked to the government structure. Some countries have an independent equality ministry, in others the machinery often takes the form of a department/unit within a ministry – often the ministry dealing with labour and social affairs. Committees (often interministerial, also parliamentary) or councils can also act as a machinery, especially when it comes to setting up and implementing plans of action to promote equality. In some countries there is a system that is independent from the government (ombuds, equality councils/agencies).

The machinery, besides its mandate linked to legislation and its implementation, is often responsible for activities linked to research, training, elaboration of specific projects and actions. Generally speaking, the mandate of institutional machinery seems to be broadening, especially in countries having had machinery for a longer time.

At the same time, consultations with NGOs seem to be developing and representatives of NGOs are associated, as a rule, with decision-making when it comes to setting up projects and action plans in the field of equality.

Another trend which can be observed, this time with regard to the location of the national institutional machinery is its decentralisation. Federal, regional and local bodies to promote equality have been set up and sometimes function independently from the central power. Decentralisation is also clear at the central level, in that focal points for equality have been created in various ministries to deal with the integration of issues related to equality in their fields. This trend can therefore be interpreted as being closely linked to the development of gender mainstreaming and, in that context, it is not impossible that there will be further evolution regarding decentralisation. An example from Norway is quite interesting in this respect, as it may give a hint for future developments. After having created, in the 1980s, local equal status committees in the municipalities, it has become clear that these "tend to be rather marginalised and without much influence. There is a growing tendency to integrate gender equality concerns into mainstream municipal committees and decision-making fora" (see Norway's answer).

In the same vein, many governments now voice a clear commitment "not to marginalise women's interests and concerns and to recognise that progress for women is progress for the whole of society" (see the answer from the United Kingdom). In the past, equality machinery was *de facto* mainly preoccupied with redressing the status of women. Now, its mandate is broadening also in the sense that it is committed to take into account men's concerns. This is a recognition of the fact that equality cannot be achieved only by giving women legal rights, it is above all a question of gender, of the social relations between the two sexes and therefore has to be worked for by women and men together.

As to action plans, it is interesting to note that most countries set up action plans to promote equality after the Beijing Conference. Many are linked to the Platform for Action, and in the new member States these are often overall plans inspired by the Platform. The countries having a longer tradition of national machinery have sometimes set up a more focused plan, working on specific critical areas of concern in the Platform. During the last years, many countries, considering that fighting violence against women and trafficking in human beings have become priorities, had developed actions plans to fight against these phenomenons.

Finally, with regard to gender mainstreaming, it is clear that progress is slow, even if there is a great interest in this new strategy in all member States. Some of the answers demonstrate that it is not yet understood everywhere what gender mainstreaming means, and that it is still mixed up with specific equality policies. The Council of Europe report on "Gender mainstreaming: practice and prospects", drafted by Ms Mieke Verloo (document EG (99) 13, December 1999), contains information on this issue. She summarises the situation in the following way: "It seems that so far, the strong political rhetoric about gender mainstreaming is not always matched by an equally strong development of concrete and detailed attempts at designing gender mainstreaming projects. [...]. The problem does not seem to be a strong resistance to gender mainstreaming, but rather "cold feet" and reluctance to experiment. Gender mainstreaming involves a fundamental reorientation and state bureaucracies are extremely hard to change." (M. Verloo, doc. cit. page 16).

APPENDIX I

LIST OF ADDRESSES ¹

Albania/Albanie

Committee for Equal Opportunities
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Rr e Kavajes
TIRANA
Tel: (355) 4247572
Fax: (355) 4247572
E-mail: womencom@icc.al.eu.org
(Ms Nora MALAJ, Chairperson)

Andorra/Andorre

Ministère de la Santé et du Bien-Etre
Avenue Princep Benlloch No. 30
ANDORRA LA VELLA
Tel : (376) 86 03 45
Fax : (376) 82 28 92
E-mail : uase@andorra.ad
(Ms Silvia Gabarre, Secrétariat d'Etat à la Famille)

Armenia/Arménie

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
3 Government House
YEREVAN 375019
Tel:/3741/ 587-672
Fax:/3741/ 581-757
Email:karhakobian@yahoo.com
Mrs Karine Hakobian, Deputy Minister

Austria/Autriche

Labour Market Service
(Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich)
Abteilung Arbeitsmarktpolitik für Frauen
Treustrasse 35-43
1200 WIEN

Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs
Radetzkystrasse 2
1030 WIEN
Tel: +43/1/71100 - 0

Belgium/Belgique

Cellule Femmes et Genre
SFP Affaires étrangères, Commerce
extérieur et Coopération au Développement
Direction générale de la coopération au
développement
Rue de Béderode 6
1000 BRUXELLES
(Mme Lina Neeb)

*Comité d'avis chargé d'examiner les
questions relatives à l'égalité des chances
entre les hommes et les femmes du
Parlement de la Communauté française*
Rue de la Loi, 6
1050 BRUXELLES
Tel: +32 2 506 38 84

*Comité d'avis pour l'égalité des chances
entre femmes et hommes*
Sénat de Belgique
Palais de la Nation
Place de la Nation 1
1009 BRUXELLES
(Mme Fatma Pelhivan, Présidente du
Comité d'avis)

*Comité d'avis pour l'égalité des chances
entre les hommes et les femmes du
Parlement wallon*
Secrétariat:
Greffé du Parlement wallon
Rue Saint-Nicolas 24
5000 NAMUR
<http://www.parlement.wallonie.be>

Comité d'avis pour l'émancipation sociale
Chambre des Représentants
Place de la Nation 1
1008 BRUXELLES
(Mme Colette Burgeon, Présidente du
Comité d'avis)

¹ This address-list contains the addresses of national institutions to promote gender equality and the advancement of women, as they were provided to the Secretariat by member states.

Commission Femmes et Développement
Ministère des Affaires étrangères, du
Commerce extérieur et de la Coopération
internationale
Rue de Béderode 6
1000 BRUXELLES
(Mme Maggi Poppe, Présidente de la
Commission)

*Conseil de l'Égalité des chances entre
hommes et femmes*
Rue Ernest Blerot 1
1070 BRUXELLES
(Mme Myriam van Varenbergh, Présidente
du Conseil)

*Direction de l'égalité des chances du
Ministère de la Communauté française*
Bd Léopold II, 44
1080 BRUXELLES
<http://www.egalite.cfwb.be>
Tél. : +32 2 413 32 24
Fax : +32 2 413 20 75

*Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles-
Capitale*
Administration des Pouvoirs locaux
Direction générale : Egalité des chances
Bd du Jardin Botanique 20
1035 BRUXELLES
(Mme Nicole Juillard, Directrice)
<http://www.mrbc.irisnet.be>
Tél. : +32 2 800 32 06
Fax : +32 2 800 38 00
E-mail : apl@mrbc.irisnet.be

Conseil de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale
Comité d'avis pour l'égalité des chances
entre les hommes et les femmes
Rue du Lombard 57-59
1000 BRUXELLES
<http://www.parlbru.irisnet.be>

Conseil Wallon de l'égalité entre hommes et
femmes
Rue du Vertbois, 13c
4000 LIEGE
E-mail : info@cesrw.be
(Mme Annie Cornet, Présidente)
Tél. : +32 4 232 98 30
Fax : +32 4 232 98 93

Equal Opportunities in Flanders Service
Ministry of Flanders
Co-ordination Department
Interdepartmental Policy-Support Division
Boudewijnlaan 30
1000 BRUXELLES
Tel: +32 2 553 58 04
Fax: +32 2 553 51 38
(Ms Martha Franken, Director)

*Flemish Minister responsible for the Equal
Opportunities Policy*
Koolstraat 35
1000 BRUXELLES
Tel: +32 2 553 24 11
Fax: +32 2 553 24 05

*Interdepartmental Equal Opportunities
Committee*
Ministry of Flanders
Co-ordination Department
Interdepartmental Policy-Support Division
Boudewijnlaan 30
1000 BRUXELLES
Tel: +32 2 553 58 04
Fax: +32 2 553 51 38

*Institut pour l'égalité des femmes et des
hommes*
Rue Ernest Blerot 1
1070 BRUXELLES
(Mme Pascale Vielle, Directrice)

**Bosnie and Herzegovina/
Bosnie-Herzégovine**

Executive bodies
*State Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia
and Herzegovina*
Kulovićevo 4
71000 SARAJEVO
+387 61 216 646
samrahf@bih.net.ba

*Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia
and Herzegovina*
Hakije Kulenovića 12
71000 SARAJEVO
+387 33 665 883
genderc@genderc.com.ba

Gender Centre of Republika Srpska
Vase Pelagica 21
78 000 BANJA LUKA
+387 51 225 031, 225 032
gcrsoffice@blic.net

Legislative bodies

*Gender Equality Commission of BiH
of the House of Representatives of the
Parliamentary Assembly of BiH*
Trg BiH 1, SARAJEVO
President: Jozo Križanović

*Gender Equality Commission
of the House of Representatives of the
Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and
Herzegovina*
Hamdije Kreševljakovića 3, SARAJEVO
President: Nada Delalić

*Gender Equality Commission
of the House of Peoples of the Parliament
of the Federation of Bosnia and
Herzegovina*
Hamdije Keševljakovića 3, SARAJEVO
President : Meliha Alic

*Committee for Social Status of Women and
Gender Equality
of the National Assembly of Republika
Srpska*
Vuka Karadžića 15, BANJA LUKA
President: Nevenka Trifkovic

Croatia/Croatie

Government of the Republic of Croatia
Office for Gender Equality
Mrs. Helena Štimac Radin
The Head of the Office
10.000 ZAGREB
Mesnička 23
Tel. +385 1 6303-090
Fax: +385 1 4569-296

Gender Equality Committee
Croatian Parliament
Mrs. Gordana Sobol
The President of the Committee
10.000 ZAGREB
Trg Sv. Marka 6
Tel: +385 1 6303-557

Gender Equality Ombudsperson
Mrs. Gordana Lukač Koritnik
10.000 ZAGREB
Preobraženska 4
Tel: +385 1 4848-100
Fax: +385 1 4844-600

Cyprus/Chypre

National Machinery for Women's Rights
Ministry of Justice and Public Order
125, Athalassas Avenue
1461 NICOSIA
Tel: +357 22 805911
Fax: +357 22 518349
Email: womens.rights@mjpo.gov.cy
(Ms Maro Varnavidou, Secretary General)

Czech Republic/République tchèque

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the
Czech Republic Dept. of the Equality of
Men and Women (Dr. Zelenková, Head of
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Gender Equality Council
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APPENDIX II QUESTIONNAIRES

1994 Questionnaire on national machinery to promote equality between women and men¹

SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

1. What was the situation as regards national machinery to promote equality between women and men at the time of the Beijing Conference in 1995?
 - a) Name and address of the institution
 - b) Date of establishment
 - c) Main tasks and powers²
 - d) Structural situation: Was it located in, or attached to, a public authority – if so, which? What was its position within the structure?
 - e) How high was the budget and was it adequate?
 - f) Was there sufficient qualified personnel?

SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

2. Since the Beijing Conference, have new mechanisms been created?
 - a) Name and address of the institution
 - b) Date of establishment
 - c) Main tasks and powers²?
 - d) Structural situation: Is it located in, or attached to, a public authority – if so, which? What is its position within the structure?
 - e) How high is the budget and is it adequate?
 - f) Is there sufficient qualified personnel?
3. Have changes been made to the institutions mentioned under 1.? If so, please describe briefly.

ACTION PLANS AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

4. Do any action plans exist at national or regional level for the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of women? If so, please describe briefly. Were they set up before the Beijing Conference?
5. Are there any provisions (statutory or other) for gender mainstreaming at national or regional level? If so, please give details.

¹ For reference as to the definition of national machinery, please see chapter H of the Beijing Platform for Action. (This questionnaire was sent to countries missing in the 1994 report on national institutional machinery.)

² Means of influence, possible sanctions, advisory or binding character of decisions etc.

1999 Questionnaire on national machinery to promote equality between women and men¹

DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN THE LAST SURVEY IN 1994 AND THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995

If your replies to the previous questionnaire of 1994² regarding national machinery to promote equality between women and men were still valid at the time of the Beijing Conference in 1995, please go to question 3. If changes have occurred, please complete 1. and 2.

1. *Changes were made* between the reply to the 1994 questionnaire and the Beijing Conference *to the institutions indicated in the replies of 1994*². Please describe, following a-f):
 - a) Name and address of the institution
 - b) Date of establishment
 - c) Main tasks and powers³
 - d) Structural situation: Was it located in, or attached to, a public authority – if so, which? What was its position within the structure?
 - e) How high was the budget and was it adequate?
 - f) Was there sufficient qualified personnel?

2. *New institutions* having been created before the Beijing Conference as compared to the replies of 1994:
 - a) Name and address of the institution
 - b) Date of establishment
 - a) Main tasks and powers³
 - c) Structural situation: Was it located in, or attached to, a public authority – if so, which? What was its position within the structure?
 - d) How high was the budget and was it adequate?
 - e) Was there sufficient qualified personnel?

SITUATION SINCE THE BEIJING CONFERENCE

3. Since the Beijing Conference, have new mechanisms been created? If so, please complete:
 - a) Name and address of the institution
 - b) Date of establishment
 - c) Main tasks and powers³
 - d) Structural situation: Was it located in, or attached to, a public authority – if so, which? What was its position within the structure?
 - e) How high was the budget and was it adequate?
 - f) Was there sufficient qualified personnel?

¹ For reference as to the definition of national machinery, please see chapter H of the Beijing Platform for Action. (This questionnaire was sent to countries included in the 1994 report on national institutional machinery.)

² Means of influence, possible sanctions, advisory or binding character of decisions etc.

4. Have changes been made to already established institutions? If so, please give details.

ACTION PLANS AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

5. Do any action plans exist at national or regional level for the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of women? If so, please describe them briefly. Were they set up before the Beijing Conference?
6. Are there any provisions (statutory or other) for gender mainstreaming at national or regional level? If so, please give details.

