

Gender equality

The major achievements during the last 2 years were:

1. Was adopted Law no. 121 of 25.05.2012 on ensuring equality.

The law provides forms of discrimination and governments prohibition of discrimination in employment, education and access to services and goods available to the public. The law contains the institutional framework for preventing and fighting the discrimination and ensuring equality and powers of public authorities.

On the basis of this Law, the Council for the prevention and elimination of discrimination and ensuring of equality commenced operation in October, 2013. In May 2014 the Council presented an activity report, stating that, during 2013, the Council received 44 complaints, of which 34 were retained for examination and of these, only two reported gender-based discrimination.

2. Was approved a new Action Plan for the period of 2013-2015 for the implementation of the current National Programme for gender equality for 2010-2015. In order to ensure compliance with the principles of gender equality in the security, legal and military service, the new action plan was approved with a new objective - Ensuring gender equality in the security, legal and military service. However, the new Action Plan stipulates and estimates financial resources to achieve the proposed actions, and this is particularly important, given that the previous plan did not contain provisions on financial allocations. Thus, the costs for implementation of actions were approved to be allocated from the following sources: the limited budgets of central public institutions, through and on the resources of donor-funded projects and costs estimated by each institution. Additional estimated costs shall be requested during its implementation from the Council/Committee coordinating the external assistance in ensuring equal opportunities between women and men or other donors.

3. Even if, *de jure* the legislation of the Republic of Moldova guarantees the equal access of women to the political process, social services, health care, education, work, marriage, child care, property, heritage and justice, *de facto* there are still barriers for women to benefit from these rights provided in the legal framework. These barriers are determined mostly by prejudices and gender stereotypes, which predictably, affect the women empowerment in the political, economic and social areas, as well as persistence of violence against women phenomena.

In order to overcome the problematic situation in the abovementioned fields, there was initiated, with the support of UN Women, a process of harmonizing the national legislation with the provisions of the Law no. 5-XVI of 9 February 2006 on equal opportunities between men and women, and taken into consideration the Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodical reports of the Republic of Moldova on CEDAW Convention that were submitted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to Government. In 2014, by Government Decision no. 322 of 8 of May 2014 was approved the Draft Law on amending certain legislative acts and submitted to the Parliament for consideration. The more important recommended amendments shall include:

- a participation rate of 40 percent of both sexes in political and public decision-making, with amendments to the Law on Government, the Law on Parliament's Rules, the Election Code, the Law on Political Parties, etc.
- Promotion of the proposals regarding the completion of Labour Code, articles 124 și 124 ¹ regarding the Paternity Leave. Initially the paternity leave was provided for 28 days. After the

approval of the Ministry of Finances, proceeding from the austerity measures of the budget, the duration of the paternity leave was reduced to a period of 14 days.

- Promoting modifications for the Press Law, Law regarding publicity, Audiovisual Code, have the purpose to compel periodicals and press agencies to use a non-sexist language and to present the images of woman and man in terms of equal rights in public and private sectors.
- Another field targets the consolidation of the Institutional Mechanism both at national and local level. At National level we have proposed the institution of the Board for coordinating foreign assistance
- in the field of gender equality within CPA, constituted from gender units, designated from the subdivisions of policies development, because the evaluations have demonstrated the inefficiency of one person's activity in a ministry. At local level, we have established new attributions for the President of the region/district, Mayor and the Secretary of the local Council. Thereby the institutional mechanism in the field, being structured and positioned at national and local level will be more viable and lucrative/workin

Media and balance approach to the image of women and men

The Association of Independent Press (AIP), in collaboration with other CSOs (Center for Independent Journalism, Center "Partnership for Development", etc.) implemented several initiatives in recent years to promote a balanced approach to the image of women and men in the media of Moldova. One of the most important initiative was the project **Promoting gender equality and self-assessment of print and electronic media** having involved 17 institutions of printed and online media for 9 months (February-October 2013), carried out under the "Economic Empowerment of Women" Programme, implemented by UN Women jointly with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Economy, with the support of the Government of Sweden. The importance of discussing this theme is even greater, as 2014 is an election year, and media institutions have an important role in promoting the ensuring of equal representation of men and women in all election processes, including the lists of candidates.

In addition, 30 media institutions signed a commitment to promote gender equality in published materials, thus helping to eliminate stereotypes and discourage the propagation of gender disparities. The activity that was held during this project concerning capacities building of journalists explains them how to ensure and how to promote gender equality in their materials. In turn, media institutions have agreed to provide an example of a gender-balanced presentation, thereby contributing to changing stereotypical attitude. As a result of this partnership with the media, the latter has come up with a series of recommendations for media organizations to a balanced representation of women and men in media products.

Education and gender

Women in the Republic of Moldova have equal access to education and the gaps are related to other aspects than the admission to educational cycles. Gender gaps in the education system are related to following issues:

- Persistence of gender stereotypes in the educational system and process
- The feminization of the educational system. Significant feminization of teaching staff is maintained at the pre-university level as well as a partial change of the ratio in the higher educational institutions. Even though women constitute the majority in the domain of education, men continue to hold **top level positions**, being those who adopt the important decisions.
- Feminization of vocational training is as result of the feminization in economic activities in the national economy. Gender discrepancy is attested at the level of specialties. We mention the fact that feminization of higher education can be explained by the efforts of female students to

compensate the gender discrimination which they will face when they will engage in the employment field. Female representatives make more effort to be enrolled in universities.

- Lack of a system of collection of information regarding the integration of gender in the programmes of initial and continuous development of the teachers.

In order to achieve the gender equality implementation in the educational system and overlapping the gender gaps, in the context of Moldova's orientation towards integration in European Union, the Ministry of Education recommended for higher education institutions the implementations of recommendations of relevant international treaties, mainly: *Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women*, *International Pact on economic, social, cultural rights*, *European Social Charter revised* in national strategies and plans in educational sector.

The Ministry coordinates the implementation of educational programs in the domains of training for family life, health, **gender equality** in general secondary school, high schools, colleges and universities, as well as it participates in the development of informative-educational and communicative materials. The gender perspective, in the context of human rights, is approached by means of thematic modules created under the strategies of continuous development of teachers related to "Civic education", "Deputy directors for education", "Elementary forms", "Technological education".

At the request of Ministry of Education, the Institute of Education Sciences undergoes permanently training of teaching staff, selected by educational institutions, in the domain of ensuring the fundamental rights of students, including **the issue of gender in the instructive-educational process**.

Due to existing stereotypes and social influences, an explicit preference for so-called female and male professions is noticeable. In order to overcome this state of affairs, the workers of higher education institutions have to encourage young women and men to choose less traditional fields of study from the gender point of view, that matched to a greater extent their own desires and vocations.

Certain trends of improvement of the situation and *encouraging the pursuit of trades that are considered nontraditional* can be seen in professional training sectors traditionally chosen by men: in the 2013 admission session, at the **Police Academy** "Stefan cel Mare", out of the total of 340 places, 104 were occupied by young women, which means 30,6% (9 women - in 2012, 0 women in 2011). At the **Military Academy** "Alexandru cel Bun", in 2013, out of the total of 70 places, 10 places (14, 3%) were assigned for the enrollment of young women in the following specialties: Infantry - 2 women; Artillery - 2 women; Transmissions - 6 women. At the **State University of Physical Education and Sports**, in 2013, out of the total of 585 places, 223 (38%) were assigned for the admission of young women at the following specialties: Fire fighting service - 5 women (25 men); Security - 30 women (95 men); recreational and recovery physical culture - 98 women (57 men) etc. At the **Technical University** of Moldova, in 2013, out of the total of 3590 places, 1040 (cca 30%) were assigned for the admission of girls (especially at the faculties of Design, Economy, Law, Technology of food products, Technology of wine and fermentation products, etc.) and, as concerns engineering specialties out of the 3230 places – 926 were applied for by young women (29%), namely: Transport operation technologies (motorcars, aircraft, railway, ships) - 43 men; 2 women; Railway, roads, bridges - 43 men; 4 women; Engineering of heating and gas supply systems, ventilation - 65 men; 9 women; Fire fighting engineering and civil protection - 36 men; 9 women; Technology of wood processing - 35 men; 3 women.

Another example is the one of the Moldova State University, where students are offered some optional subject matters related to ensuring gender equality: *Women in history* (author – dr. Rodica Țugulschi, Faculty of History and Philosophy), *Women of great dictators* (author – dr. habil., prof. Anatol Petrencu); *Equality of genders/Gender equality ???* (author – dr. habil., associate prof. Valentina Bodrug) etc.

At the same time, other universities (MSU, SPU, SUPES, Tiraspol SU) offer continuous training regarding the ensurance of a complex approach of the gender equality in regulatory documents in all university fields and at all the levels of decision making and enforcement, in the context of university autonomy.

Thus, higher education institutions take into account the need to ensure the access of male and female students to various institutional services and privileges, including grants and fellowships grounded on equality.

The secondary vocational education curricula related to certain trades were adjusted throughout the duration of 2013, taking into account the respect for human rights and the gender perspective. Furthermore, in secondary vocational and middle vocational education institutions an optional discipline comprising the gender dimension was proposed - "Decisions for a healthy way of life". In the school year 2013-2014 in these institutions, students are taught this discipline starting from the first year.

The curriculum in the middle vocational education system was re-assessed from the gender perspective for psycho pedagogy and pedagogy (in pedagogic colleges).

In higher education institutions, in keeping with university autonomy, each educational entity adjusts its study programmes in accordance with legislative and normative acts.

Violence against women

Unfortunately, domestic violence against women is widely practiced in Moldova. The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family has developed a framework regulation on the organization and operation of centers for assistance and protection of domestic violence victims, which was approved by the Government. The Regulation includes explicit provisions on the purpose and objectives of the centers, principles of activity, organization and operation, placement of beneficiaries in the centers, management of the center, staffing and funding.

The authorities have taken concrete steps towards active involvement in preventing and combating domestic violence; consequently, a draft Law on Domestic Violence was drafted.

The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family drafted a law on amending and supplementing the legislative framework in line with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and improving the mechanism for enforcement of the Law 45-XVI dated March 1, 2007 on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence. Thus, in preparing the draft law on amending and supplementing the legislative framework in line with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the authors took into account the findings and recommendations of the Compatibility Report. The draft law was submitted for public consultation to ministries, relevant international organizations and NGOs.

Also, during 2013, the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family, in partnership with the office of the Social Attaché of the Federal Ministry for Labor, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria, in the context of the eventual signing and ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Domestic Violence by the Republic of Moldova, organized a series of activities, including: a meeting with the Members of Parliament of the Republic of Moldova to discuss the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and the importance of its ratification by the Republic of Moldova, the round table with different stakeholders to discuss the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Domestic Violence and the importance of its ratification by the Republic of Moldova.

The Government of Moldova supports the international Campaign '16 Days against gender-based violence' that was carried out in Moldova for the 11th year in a row.

The '16 Days' National Campaign focused on the need to address more deeply the ways in which the current legal and regulatory framework (in particular the legislation regarding restraining orders) is enforced, the need to develop services aimed at ensuring the protection of victims, namely by capacity building efforts aimed at relevant officers, in the light of the new legal provisions. Over 100 mayors from

different towns and villages in Moldova joined last year the United Nations Global Initiative COMMIT by organizing a flash mob that reflected their commitment to act against violence against women and girls in communities.

Traditionally, the activities which were carried out as part of the Campaign were organized by the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family in cooperation with other central agencies, local public administration authorities, development partners and CSOs.

For the year 2014 two big companies: 16 days and International Family Day were covered from financial resources of State budgeting.

Capacities building. During 2014, the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family has implemented, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration, Mission in Moldova and with the support of the US State Department, NRS trainings at community level for the local MDTs (with the participation of social assistants, medical staff and police officers) in 10 rayons, on the topic “ Protection and assistance of the victims of human trafficking and domestic violence within the National Referral System”.

In the same context, 500 police officers were trained on the topic of legal framework in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence, with the participation of Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and The General Inspectorate of Police, organized by the Women Law Centre and UNFPA, with the support of US State Department.