

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 29 April 2021

GEC(2021)1 Revised

**Activities and measures at the national level
contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the
Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023**

**Activités et mesures au niveau national contribuant
à la réalisation des objectifs de la Stratégie du Conseil de l'Europe
pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes 2018-2023**

2020

Contributions appear in the language as submitted.
Les contributions apparaissent dans la langue laquelle elles ont été soumises.

Contents

ANDORRA	5
ARMENIA	12
AUSTRIA	19
AZERBAIJAN	29
BELGIUM	33
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	42
BULGARIA	54
CROATIA	71
CYPRUS	87
DENMARK	95
ESTONIA	99
FINLAND	105
FRANCE	109
GEORGIA	113
GERMANY	138
GREECE	144
HUNGARY	153
ICELAND	157
IRELAND	161
ITALY	167
LATVIA	185
LITHUANIA	187
LUXEMBOURG	191
MALTA	198
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	206
MONACO	217
MONTENEGRO	224
The NETHERLANDS	228
NORTH MACEDONIA	231
NORWAY	236
ROMANIA	242
SERBIA	258
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	269
SLOVENIA	277
SPAIN	283
SWEDEN	295

SWITZERLAND	300
TURKEY	303
UKRAINE	312

ANDORRA

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

a) La loi 13/2019, du 15 janvier, en faveur de l'égalité de traitement et de la non-discrimination, crée l'Observatoire de l'égalité (*Observatori de la Igualtat*) en tant qu'organe conseiller du gouvernement. Il s'agit là de l'une des mesures qui découlent du Livre blanc de l'égalité en Andorre et de la propre loi avec, pour principal objectif collecter et traiter les informations, interpréter les données et les moyens, réaliser des études, évaluer l'égalité et la non-discrimination et recommander au gouvernement la promotion de propositions et de plans d'action.

À travers le décret du 19-2-2020 portant approbation du règlement de l'Observatoire de l'égalité, et conformément au paragraphe 3 de l'article 29 de la loi 13/2019, l'Observatoire est constitué comme un organe collégial spécifique du gouvernement à caractère technique et conseiller avec, pour objectif, contribuer à connaître la situation des femmes et autres collectifs en risque de vulnérabilité en Andorre, en vue d'une meilleure prise de décisions, planification et évaluation des politiques publiques, en coordonnant les travaux à développer pour collecter, traiter et interpréter les données, les moyens et les études, et évaluer l'égalité et la non-discrimination en Andorre.

Durant le mois de juin de cette année, l'Assemblée exécutive et la formation plénière de l'Observatoire se sont constitués. L'Observatoire de l'égalité est appelé à répondre et donner suite à la collecte de données, à la réalisation d'enquêtes auprès de la population, à l'élaboration d'études et à la conception b) Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre élabore la loi d'égalité effective entre les femmes et les hommes. Actuellement, le brouillon du texte a déjà été rédigé et un processus de collaboration a commencé avec différents agents (administration publique, *Consell General* (Parlement) et société civile) en vue de parvenir à un consensus sur un document avant qu'il n'accède à la procédure parlementaire.

c) Le *Consell General* travaille actuellement à l'amélioration de la rédaction finale du projet de loi de modification du Code pénal. Le texte naquit dans l'intention d'interdire la publicité sur la prostitution dans les médias du pays, et il a fini par incorporer un durcissement des amendes économiques pour les personnes ou les collectifs qui favorisent ou promeuvent la prostitution, l'exploitation des personnes ou la pornographie infantile. Ces amendes seront désormais de 30.000 € ou jusqu'au triple du bénéfice total obtenu.

1.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Approuvé en mai 2018, le Guide de collaboration se compose d'un protocole de détection précoce des cas de violence fondée sur le genre, en réponse à la loi 6/2014 sur les services sociaux et socio-sanitaires, et des protocoles d'action spécifiques suivants :

- Protocole d'action du département des Affaires sociales relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action du Corps de Police relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action du *Servei d'Ocupació* (Pôle emploi) relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action dans l'assistance des soins de santé de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action du Centre de Santé mentale relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action de l'Unité des Conduites addictives relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action de l'Association des femmes d'Andorre relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.

Auxquels il faut ajouter :

- Protocole d'action relatif à la médiation dans des cas de violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocole d'action de l'Association action féministe d'Andorre relatif à l'assistance de la violence de genre et domestique.
- Protocol de prévention et d'intervention des Comuns dans des cas de violence de genre et domestique.

Le 22 juin 2020, le ministère des Affaires sociales, du Logement et de la Jeunesse et le ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, signèrent et mirent au point le plan de sensibilisation pour l'égalité de genre dans les établissements scolaires d'Andorre. Ce plan offre des orientations avec perspectives de genre qui, avec le Guide de collaboration en cas de violence de genre et domestique, entend donner à tous les professionnels qui interviennent dans le milieu scolaire, des directives à suivre visant à traiter les garçons et les filles sur un pied d'égalité réelle et effective dans les politiques éducatives, et éliminer les inégalités de genre qui caractérisent le système social et culturel dans lequel nous vivons. Les principes d'action sont : la prévention comme axe fondamental et transversal, la transversalité de genre, la visibilité des femmes, le respect à la diversité et à l'éducation inclusive et la participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes. Le plan établit également un parcours clair dans la détection et l'intervention dans des cas de violence de genre et domestique. Ce plan est actuellement diffusé à travers la page web du département des Affaires Sociales, les médias et il a été adressé aux diverses associations¹.

Chaque année scolaire, des ateliers de prévention sont également organisés dans toutes les centres d'enseignement du pays, concrètement des ateliers sur la violence fondée sur le genre, le harcèlement et l'égalité.

Nous tenons à souligner que, dans le domaine des femmes handicapées victimes de violences de genre, un protocole spécifique a été formalisé avec le Département de promotion de l'autonomie personnelle, qui est une référence pour les personnes en situation de handicap, dans le but de détecter et d'assurer une intervention précise et soignée auprès de ces victimes. En outre, la disposition finale neuvième de la loi 27/2017 prévoit l'approbation d'un Protocole d'action auprès des victimes d'infractions pénales avec une attention toute particulière aux femmes et aux filles en situation de handicap. Bien qu'actuellement ce protocole n'ait pas été approuvé, la mise en œuvre des obligations découlant de la Convention relative aux droits des personnes en situation de handicap ainsi que la loi 27/2017 relative à l'application des mesures d'urgence pour l'application de cette convention, constituent des axes stratégiques du ministère des Affaires Sociales et sont incluses dans les plans d'action de cette législature.

Le 14 octobre 2020 fut approuvée, et le Conseil des ministres du Gouvernement en fut informé, l'adaptation dans un format accessible, moyennant la lecture facile, de la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique.

L'adaptation a pour but d'atteindre les groupes en risque de vulnérabilité et d'exclusion sociale comme, par exemple, les personnes en situation de handicap intellectuel ou cognitif, même si elle s'adresse également à l'ensemble de la population pour donner à connaître les dispositions de la convention dans un langage plus proche et synthétique, en combinaison avec des images.

Le document a été partagé avec les associations défendant les intérêts et les droits des femmes et des personnes en situation de handicap.

¹<https://www.aferssocials.ad/images/stories/Collectius/Igualtat/200622%20Pla%20sensibilitzaci%C3%B3%20per%20a%20la%20igualtat%20de%20g%C3%A8nere%20als%20centres%20educatius%20d'Andorra.pdf>

La Convention d'Istanbul, adaptée en format accessible à travers la lecture facile, sera présentée cette année, le 25 novembre, dans le cadre de la campagne de la Journée internationale pour l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes. La diffusion sera faite à travers la page web du Gouvernement et sur les réseaux sociaux.

Le 15 septembre 2020, le ministère des Affaires sociales, du Logement et de la Jeunesse du Gouvernement de l'Andorre et les *Cònsols* des 7 paroisses du pays signèrent le protocole de prévention et d'action des *Comuns* en cas de violence de genre et domestique.

Le document fut élaboré en tenant compte de l'application et du respect de la loi 1/2015, du 15 janvier, pour l'éradication de la violence fondée sur le genre et la violence domestique (ci-après, loi 1/2015) ; de la loi 13/2019, du 15 février, pour l'égalité de traitement et de la non-discrimination (ci-après, loi 13/2019) et de la loi 14/2019, du 15 février, qualifiée, des droits de l'enfance et de l'adolescence (ci-après, loi 14/2019). Les dispositions de la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique (ci-après, la Convention d'Istanbul) ont également été prises comme référence.

Les principes d'action sont :

- **La prévention comme axe fondamental et transversal** : la conception des politiques et des actions à entreprendre a pour objectif de prévenir et éviter des actions, omissions ou comportements de violence fondée sur le genre et de violence domestique.
- **L'intervention intégrale** : l'intervention pour prévenir et combattre les situations de violence fondée sur le genre et de violence domestique doit être multidisciplinaire et englober de la détection à la récupération intégrale. Le travail doit être coordonné et en réseau pour éviter une victimisation secondaire.
- **La transversalité de genre** : les politiques et les actions à entreprendre doivent être abordées dans une perspective de genre afin de pouvoir éliminer la discrimination sociale et les attitudes sexistes qui encouragent la violence fondée sur le genre et la violence domestique, ou d'autres discriminations et inégalités.
- **La participation citoyenne** : les actions menées à terme doivent promouvoir et encourager la création, la collaboration et la participation des entités, des syndicats, des associations et des organisations qui, depuis la société civile, agissent contre la violence fondée sur le genre et la violence domestique.

Les objectifs du protocole sont :

- Mener à terme des actions pour prévenir les cas et détecter, de manière précoce, des situations de violence fondée sur le genre et de violence domestique ou des situations de risque d'en souffrir.
- Protéger toute victime de violence fondée sur le genre et de violence domestique.
- Améliorer les procédures de détection, notification, évaluation, intervention et suivi.
- Soulager l'impact causé à la victime lorsque la situation d'agression s'est déjà produite, et effectuer un suivi et une procédure appropriés.

La prise en charge sociale par les *Comuns*, à travers des services sociaux destinés aux citoyens (aides économiques, cours de formation, activités culturelles, activités sportives et d'été, loisirs, crèches et ludothèques, etc.) fournit un espace qui facilite la recherche active et la détection précoce de victimes de possibles situations de violence fondée sur le genre et de violence domestique, aussi bien chez des adultes que sur des mineurs.

1.3 changements institutionnels

Le 2 mars 2020 fut créé le *Servei Integral d'Atenció a la Dona* (Service intégral d'aide aux femmes) (SIAD) appelé à devenir un espace public d'information et de conseils pour les personnes qui

nécessitent d'être orientées dans les domaines de la santé sexuelle et reproductive, et compris le planning familial. Le SIAD qui assure une attention individualisée, gratuite et couvre l'ensemble du territoire, possède également plusieurs protocoles multidisciplinaires qui incluent la possibilité de rediriger la personne vers un autre service psychologique, juridique, social et gynécologique, pour répondre ainsi de manière intégrale aux circonstances particulières de chaque cas.

Les objectifs généraux sont :

- a) Assurer l'accès à une information large et factuelle sur santé sexuelle et reproductive, et compris le planning familial, tout en assurant à tous les utilisateurs un service accessible, abordable et acceptable.
- b) Faciliter et promouvoir les décisions responsables et volontaires quant à la procréation et aux méthodes librement choisies de planning familial, ainsi que sur d'autres méthodes susceptibles d'être choisies pour régler la fécondité, et assurer l'accès à l'information, à l'éducation et aux moyens nécessaires.
- c) Répondre aux nécessités changeantes en matière de santé reproductive durant toute la durée du cycle vital, de sorte à respecter la diversité des circonstances des communautés.

En ce qui concerne les demandes d'informations ayant trait, concrètement, à l'interruption de la grossesse, le service comporte deux phases. L'une, destinée à une information préalable à l'interruption volontaire de la grossesse et qui est ouverte à toute la population désireuse de se renseigner sur ce sujet. Dans ces cas, le service a défini un protocole d'action qui commence avec la demande de l'utilisateur ou utilisatrice.

Le SIAD prévoit également, dans une phase ultérieure à l'interruption d'une grossesse volontaire ou involontaire, une assistance et une attention ouvertes à toutes les personnes intéressées, surtout à la femme qui a vécu cette expérience et, le cas échéant, à son milieu familial.

Le 2 mars 2020, le SIAD fut présenté à toute la population et un diptyque explicatif du service fut diffusé, consultable également sur la page web de « Santé » du Gouvernement de l'Andorre².

Il est prévu que le SIAD, qui est un service formé par différents professionnels, assure des formations spécifiques sur la violence sexuelle et qu'il se constitue également comme un service spécifique de soins et de suivi auprès de victimes de la violence sexuelle.

Depuis trois ans, le département des Politiques en Faveur de l'Égalité réalise des formations sur la violence fondée sur le genre et la violence domestique à tous les professionnels susceptibles de détecter et d'intervenir dans des cas de violence de genre et domestique.

Afin de dispenser une formation continue aux professionnels, le 8 août 2020 une convention fut signée entre le ministère des Affaires sociales, du Logement et de la Jeunesse et l'Université d'Andorre (*Universitat d'Andorra*) pour la formation de base et de qualification des professionnels (hommes et femmes) qui, directement ou indirectement, interviennent dans des cas de violence de genre et domestique.

Sept séances, d'une durée de cinq heures chacune, auront lieu. Les groupes qui en feront partie sont : le Corps de Police, le Service andorran des soins de santé (SAAS, pour *Servei Andorrà d'Atenció Sanitària*), les 7 Comuns, l'Ordre des psychologues d'Andorre (*Col·legi de Psicòlegs d'Andorra*) et l'Association du Barreau d'Andorre (*Col·legi d'Advocats d'Andorra*). Ce commencement le 3 novembre 2020 et s'achèveront le 2 février 2021.

Les formations abordent des éléments comme l'égalité des genres, les stéréotypes et les rôles de genre, le cadre juridique de la violence de genre, les définitions, les types, les domaines, le cycle de la

² https://www.salut.ad/images/stories/portada/passama_SIAD_WEB.pdf

violence de genre, les conséquences chez les femmes et les mineurs, etc. Il est également question du Guide de collaboration et des protocoles d'action spécifiques afin que, une fois les professionnels ont procédé à la détection, ils puissent réaliser l'intervention et le transfert appropriés évitant, entre autres, les mauvaises pratiques et la victimisation secondaire.

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Tous les ans, le 8 mars, le Gouvernement de l'Andorre célèbre la Journée internationale des droits des femmes, en réalisant plusieurs actions qui s'adressent à la population andorrane dans un souci de sensibilisation face aux discriminations dont souffrent les femmes du simple fait de l'être.

Ces actions s'inscrivent dans le cadre des actions de lutte contre la discrimination de genre et sont en accord avec l'objectif numéro 5 des ODD de l'Agenda 2030.

Cette année, des conférences destinées à l'ensemble de la population furent organisées conjointement avec l'association *Acció feminista* (Action féministe) sous le titre « Journées en faveur de l'égalité de genre : de la coéducation à l'égalité de genre sur le lieu de travail ». Deux grands thèmes étroitement liés entre eux furent abordés : d'une part la coéducation et, d'autre part, l'égalité de genre sur le lieu de travail. Ces deux axes furent choisis en considérant qu'une coéducation scolaire particulièrement sensible aux conséquences du sexisme chez les garçons et les filles peut s'avérer favorable pour, ultérieurement, éradiquer les inégalités entre les hommes et les femmes dans le monde du travail.

Ces journées se déroulèrent les 4 et 5 mars et quatre expertes en la matière y participèrent avec une assistance d'une cinquantaine de personnes à chaque séance.

D'autre part, le 8 mars, un acte fut organisé, ouvert à toute la population, à l'occasion de la remise du « Prix Olympe de Gouges » qui distingue les entreprises qui se sont engagées en faveur de l'égalité de genre sur le lieu de travail et qui travaillent, de manière transversale et communautaire, à la promotion de la culture de l'égalité.

Depuis, le Gouvernement de l'Andorre décerne chaque année cette récompense lors de l'acte de commémoration de la journée internationale des droits des femmes, comme un acte de reconnaissance publique aux entreprises ou aux entités qui ont été récompensées.

Cette année le prix fut remis à 4 entreprises qui présentèrent leur plan d'égalité de genre. Trois de ces entreprises avaient également inclus un protocole relatif au harcèlement sexuel et/ou en raison du genre.

Une autre action menée à terme fut la traduction au catalan, langue officielle de l'Andorre, et la diffusion de la vidéo « En combattant le sexisme » du Conseil de l'Europe³. Le département des Politiques en Faveur de l'Égalité fit partie du groupe de la GEC chargé d'élaborer le document CM/Rec(2019)1 du Comité des ministres des États membres sur la prévention et la lutte contre le sexisme. Ce document fut traduit au catalan, envoyé aux associations de femmes puis diffusé.

Finalement, comme tous les ans, le Gouvernement de l'Andorre a lancé un appel pour organiser un rassemblement en dehors des bâtiments de l'administration publique et de certaines entreprises en vue de manifester leur soutien à la lutte pour parvenir à l'égalité de genre.

Chaque année, une campagne est organisée autour du 25 novembre, Journée internationale pour l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes mais, toute l'année durant, des conférences et des formations sont organisées à l'intention de l'ensemble de la population, en vue de sensibiliser et de faire prendre conscience de la violence de genre et de la violence domestique. Le 24 septembre de

³ www.aferssocials.ad

cette année, concrètement, fut organisée une conférence sous le titre « Hommes du XXI^e siècle : masculinités alternatives et coresponsabilité », que prononça le psychologue et membre de l'association « *Entrehomes* » dont le siège se trouve à Barcelone.

Cette campagne fait partie des actions préventives contre la violence fondée sur le genre que le département des Politiques en Faveur de l'Égalité du ministère des Affaires sociales, du Logement et de la Jeunesse promeut chaque année, et elle répond également à la loi 1/2015 pour l'éradication de la violence fondée sur le genre et de la violence domestique.

Elle s'inscrit également dans le cadre des actions de sensibilisation du Programme pour la promotion de relations non-violentes (PRNV, pour *Promoció de Relacions No Violentes*) qui est du ressort du département des Politiques en Faveur de l'Égalité du ministère des Affaires sociales, du Logement et de la Jeunesse du Gouvernement de l'Andorre et qui commença son activité en 2017, comme une suite à la loi 1/2015. Il convient de rappeler que le Programme pour la promotion de relations non-violentes est un espace destiné à l'acquisition de compétences sociales en vue d'établir des relations respectueuses et sans avoir recours à la violence.

La campagne de cette année, le 25 de novembre pour commémorer la Journée internationale pour l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes, consiste en une vidéo dans laquelle des professionnels de différents départements susceptibles de détecter et d'intervenir dans les cas de violence fondée sur le genre prononceront des phrases pédagogiques ayant trait à la violence fondée sur le genre, et prendront position contre cette violence dans le but de montrer clairement l'implication des professionnels, hommes et femmes, dans la prise en charge des femmes et de leurs enfants susceptibles de souffrir des violences.

1.5 autres développements pertinents

En 2019, les formations pertinentes furent réalisées aux médias conformément aux lois 1/2015 et 13/2019 et en tant qu'agents de socialisation, deux niveaux de formation furent concrètement organisés :

1. Formation de base : dispensée par la responsable et par l'une des psychologues du Département. 4 groupes de formation eurent lieu ; d'une durée de deux heures, avec à la participation de 60 personnes.
2. Formation conduisant à certains niveaux de compétence : le 4 novembre, l'experte en genre et moyens de communication, Joana Gallego (professeure à l'UAB) réalise une formation, de 9 à 12 h, à des professionnels issus des moyens de communication, des affaires sociales, de l'éducation et de la santé, Police, etc. Les thèmes traités furent : publicité sexiste, langage avec perspective de genre, traitement des informations relatives à la violence de genre et domestique et protection à l'enfance.

À la fin de ces formations il fut décidé, avec l'association des moyens de communication et les différents médias, de rédiger un document de bonnes pratiques qui rassemblerait tous ces thèmes et servirait de guide aux médias. Durant cette année deux réunions ont été organisées, une ébauche a été rédigée et les réunions reprendront en septembre pour achever ce document.

Depuis 2018, le département des Politiques en Faveur de l'Égalité possède un accord avec l'un des médias du pays, Cadena Ser, relatif au projet « Être femme » (*Ser dona*). Ce projet, mené à terme chaque année, et il s'agit en la réalisation de diverses interviews à des femmes du pays, pour faire connaître la figure de la femme comme une figure clé dans le développement de la société andorrane. Un spot publicitaire mensuel est également réalisé présentant certains de nos services et des actes menés à terme depuis le département des Politiques en Faveur de l'Égalité, en fonction des journées internationales commémoratives.

À la fin un acte de clôture est organisé, avec une conférence qui s'adresse à toute la population et dont l'égalité de genre est le thème principal.

Le 22 septembre 2020, eut lieu l'acte de clôture de cette année au cours duquel une table ronde fut organisée sur le thème du traitement de la violence de genre dans les moyens de communication ; en également un hommage aux femmes interviewées et l'interprétation musicale d'une auteure-compositrice-interprète andorrane.

ARMENIA**1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism****1.1 Legislative changes**

- According to article 6 of the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, direct and indirect gender discrimination is prohibited in all spheres of public life. It is forbidden to make insulting, degrading public statements about a person on the basis of gender, including in the mass media. Article 19 of the same Law confirms that a person who believes he/she has been subjected to gender discrimination, has the right to apply to the competent state and local authorities for the restitution and protection of his/her violated rights and freedoms.
- Applying to state and local authorities for violation of gender equality on the basis of part 1 of this article does not restrict the right to judicial protection of a person, as well as to receiving the assistance of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia.
- On 4 October 2019, by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, Armenia has adopted the 2019-2023 Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Action Plan, the main goal of which is to strengthen the unified system of national policy-making and implementation mechanisms, including national-institutional mechanisms.
- An amendment has been made to the acting Criminal Code envisaging liability for public calls of violence. In particular according to the Law on “Making Amendments to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia” adopted on 15 April 2020, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia was amended by Article 226.2, which provides liability for public calls of violence against a person or a group of persons by sex, race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion, worldview, political or other views, ethnicity, property, birth, disability, age or other personal or social circumstances, for publicly justifying such violence or preaching it.
- In order to address the issue of hate speech, the National Human Rights Strategy and Deriving Action Plan for 2020-2022 adopted in December 2019 envisage elaborating liability for hate speech in accordance with the best international standards (Action N 42) and to raise public awareness on hate speech (Action N 44).⁴ It should be noted that in order to set liability for hate speech in accordance with the best international standards, the Ministry of Justice had requested a Council of Europe expert opinion on hate speech liability regulations (international experience) and on existing gaps in our legislation along with the recommendations on how to address them. The relevant expertise was received and based on the recommendations’ relevant amendments to our domestic legislation are now being developed.
- The Government of Armenia also carries out extensive activities related to raising awareness on hate speech. The Ministry of Justice in co-operation with the Human Rights Defender’s office and with the support of the Council of Europe has initiated the process of elaboration of an awareness-raising campaign. The aim of the campaign is to increase awareness among target groups about hate speech and counter hate narratives, promoting diversity and human rights. The process has already launched and we have elaborated the concept of the campaign to start to disseminate the products of the campaign as soon as possible.

1.2 Policy changes

The Council for Women's Affairs is established as a national mechanism that supports the introduction of mechanisms for the inclusion of women's social and political resources in the democratisation process of society, ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men.

The Deputy Prime Minister heads this council, whose objectives include fighting against violence, combating discrimination in all sectors of public life and promoting women’s economic empowerment. Representatives from stakeholder state bodies, non-governmental and international

⁴ <http://www.e-rights.am/>

organisations can participate in the activities of the council. The Interagency Working Group operates with the purpose of organising the ongoing activities of the council.

The government has taken measures to promote equal economic independence for women and men and to remove barriers to women's labour market participation; Various state programmes have been developed in all spheres of public and political life, to ensure the involvement of women in the decision-making process. In particular, vocational training programmes are being implemented and much importance is being given to increasing the opportunities of accessing the labour market by uncompetitive young mothers by way of professional training and mentoring programmes of employers, in addition to developing and implementing childcare support programs and Women's Leadership in Small and Medium Enterprises. At the regional level, "Women's Resource Centres" are being established which aims to strengthen the capacity of rural women.

1.3 Institutional changes

In accordance with the Draft Law "On Ensuring Equality", the Equality Council will be established. In accordance with the draft, the Equality Council is a consultative body adjunct to the Human Rights Defender, with a purpose to assist the Human Rights Defender in ensuring equality and protection from any type of discrimination. The Equality Council is based on principles of equality, impartiality, publicity, transparency, accessibility and representation. The objectives of the Equality Council are to assist the Human Rights Defender in his activities towards ensuring equality before the law and equal opportunities, prevention and elimination of discrimination in the Republic of Armenia. The Equality Council:

- 1) Shall assist the Human Rights Defender in considering the complaints relating to the areas prescribed by part 1 of the present article and shall present its advisory opinion to the Human Rights Defender relating to violations identified therein.
- 2) If necessary, shall submit to the Human Rights Defender the recommendations to carry out the specific powers reserved by the Constitutional Law of the Republic of Armenia "On the Human Rights Defender". The Council may also recommend the Human Rights Defender to submit a supportive position (*amicus curiae*) to the Constitutional and Cassation Courts of the Republic of Armenia about the discrimination cases.
- 3) Shall assist the Human Rights Defender also in:
 - a. providing consultation to organisations as well as national and local self-governing bodies.
 - b. raising public awareness to prevent all forms of discrimination.
 - c. conducting research and studies about discrimination as well as developing the Human Rights Defender's annual report in regard to issues of equality and elimination of discrimination.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The priorities of the gender policy are defined in the 2019-2023 gender strategy. The strategy is aimed at creating favourable conditions for the realisation of opportunities for women and men in all spheres of public life. The development of the strategy was carried out on a participatory basis, involving various stakeholders in the field. The strategy defines 5 priorities: 1) Improving the National Mechanism for the Advancement of Women, Ensuring Equal Participation of Women and Men in Governance, at the Decision-Making Level, 2) Overcoming gender discrimination in the socio-economic sphere, expanding women's economic opportunities, 3) Enhancing full and effective participation of women and men in education and science, 4) Enhancing equal opportunities for women and men in the field of healthcare, 5) Prevention of Gender Discrimination.

Thus, the government continues to take measures aimed at integrating the gender component in the legislations and policies, improving the national mechanism for the advancement of women, conducting awareness-raising activities to overcome existing stereotypes in society, preventing domestic violence, combating gender-based discrimination (e.g. measures to fight Gender-biased Sex Selection) ensuring women's participation in politics and public life.

In addition, the Government has taken measures to address the needs of persons displaced in the result of the military aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Nagorno Karabakh (with a focus on vulnerable women and girls). Beneficiaries were provided with psychological, social support services and financial assistance (based on needs). A centre was established to provide housing and other essential services, at the centre. The needs of the displaced persons were identified, assessed and addressed. In addition, dignity kits containing essential hygiene items for women and new-borns were distributed to displaced women and girls. It is important to note that particular support was provided to pregnant women by ensuring the provision of safe access to healthcare services for mothers and new-borns.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

With the support of the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan, a new round of training will be provided for the social workers in social assistance centres, which will contribute to the development of their professional skills in the framework of the fight against domestic violence and promoting gender equality.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

It should be noted that the Ministry of Justice has carried out a number of activities aimed at the ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Taking into consideration existing public opinions the MOJ published the information publication on misunderstandings within our society on the convention. One of the main questions raised is its compatibility with the Armenian Constitution. In that context the Ministry of Justice has requested an opinion from the Venice Commission. The latter stated that there is no obstacle of constitutionality which could prevent Armenia from ratifying the convention. See more in the Opinion on the constitutional implications of the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) adopted by the Venice Commission at its 120th Plenary Session (Venice, 11-12 October 2019).⁵ In accordance with the internal procedure envisaged by the “Law of the Republic of Armenia on International Agreements” the Ministry of Justice sent the relevant package of the ratification to the Government of Armenia and will then submit the package to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia in the upcoming months.

The Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention) was ratified by the Republic of Armenia on 30 May 2020. Currently, in order to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Convention, it is envisaged to amend the RA Law “On the Rights of the Child” and the RA Civil Code. The Ministry of Justice has carried out a comprehensive analysis of existing gaps of our Criminal and Criminal Procedure Code in compatibility with the convention. The relevant Council of Europe expert opinion was also requested and received in September 2019. Based on these documents relevant suggestions have been submitted to the working group on the elaboration of draft new Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes and were taken into consideration. The New Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes drafts were approved by the Government of Armenia. Besides, the Ministry of Justice elaborated the Action Plan on the application of the convention, which was adopted on 31 July 2020, by N 855 decision of the Prime Minister.⁶

Changes will be introduced on the Law on Prevention of Violence within the Family, Protection of Victims of Violence within the Family and Restoration of Peace in the Family (DV Law) to address current challenges.

⁵ [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2019\)018-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2019)018-e)

⁶ <https://www.e-gov.am/decrees/item/22458/>

2.2 Policy changes

The new Strategy and deriving Action Plan on Human Rights for 2020-2022 envisages a number of events related to combating violence against women and domestic violence for upcoming three years, in particular it is envisaged:

- to carry out training on the subject of domestic violence and violence against women in line with international standards including police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges and medical personnel, representatives of educational institutions, and the staff of support centres for victims of domestic violence;
- to adopt an action plan to fight domestic violence;
- to establish legislation on procedural guarantees of remedy for survivors of domestic violence and violence against women in accordance with international standards;
- studying the causes, conditions and consequences of domestic violence, the draft decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia “On approving the 2021-2023 Action Plan for Combating Domestic Violence in The Republic of Armenia and Its Implementation Measures” was developed. Experts were involved in the process of developing the action plan with the support of the Council of Europe, and it will be submitted for public discussion in the near future.

2.3 Institutional changes

As mentioned in point 1.2, the Council for Women's Affairs has been established as a national mechanism that supports the introduction of mechanisms for the inclusion of women's social and political resources in the democratisation process of society, ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men. The council monitors the impact of state policies on gender equality, women's empowerment in various spheres of public life, opportunities for expansion, reduction of discrimination, and prevention of gender-based violence.

The council may establish temporary thematic groups to address individual issues or pressing issues in the area of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, with the recommendation and participation of non-board experts, the business community, and representatives of international and non-governmental organisations.

Since 2020, domestic violence centres were launched in all regions of the country which are co-funded by the state budget of the Republic of Armenia. The support centres provide services to beneficiaries, such as social-psychological and legal support. With the co-funding provided by the state budget, there have been two shelters for victims of domestic violence, and support centres have been established in all regions of Armenia and Yerevan. All the centres were provided with a “hotline” numbers.

In order to provide adequate support for the prevention of domestic violence, comprehensive co-operation is provided in the provision of quality assistance to victims of domestic violence in the regions. Within this framework, in September-October 2020, training was provided to support centre and shelter staff and was organised in co-operation with international organisations and NGOs in the field. Training courses are ongoing and a new round of training will be provided in 2021 in order to give quality care for victims.

In order to support the victims of domestic violence, a lump sum financial assistance programme is being implemented to the victims of domestic violence from 2020, within the framework of which it is envisaged to provide up to 150,000 AMD annually from the state budget (a lump sum financial support).

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In co-operation with international non-governmental organisations, awareness campaigns aimed at combating domestic violence were carried out: Social advertisements were filmed and posters were printed and posted in public places.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, with the support of the Council of Europe jointly with the Ministry of Justice, launched a public awareness campaign “Silence in violence” aimed at combating domestic violence.

COVID-19 awareness and information posters were developed and distributed in different regions. With the support of the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan, a new round of training will be provided to frontline workers such as help line workers (114-911), social workers, and psychologists and MLSA officials.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

In order to properly carry out the centralised registration of domestic violence cases, the “Electronic Information System for Centralised Registration of Domestic Violence Cases” is under development. Through the system, all data related to domestic violence will be collected and statistics and their progress will be conducted electronically. Gender-disaggregated data are crucial to understand the context and design gender sensitive policies.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The Draft Law “On Ensuring Equality” envisages changes within the regulations of burden of proof. In accordance with Article 8 of the Draft: “When reviewing a complaint about the discrimination by the court, the Human Rights Defender or other State body, the applicant or the plaintiff presents the data and arguments that prima facie justify existence of discrimination, and the obligation to prove the absence of discrimination is brought to the defendant or to the person against whom the complaint is filed.”

3.3 Institutional changes

Please also see answer to the question 1.3.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Training has been organised by the Academy of Justice related to violence against women and domestic violence for judges, their candidates, for prosecutors and their candidates, for investigators and their candidates. The annual training programme of the Academy of justice for 2020 included courses on “Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia”, as well as “Characteristics of violence against children and examination features”. Within the framework of the programme “Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia” of the Council of Europe, the HELP online training course was adapted, within the framework whereby the training for investigators, prosecutors, and judges was carried out.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Armenia has repeatedly declared its commitment to advance women’s rights, to effectively promote their participation in country’s public life, particularly, at the decision-making and local levels. Women make up a quarter of the National Assembly. Moreover, in 2021 the quota for women’s representation in elective bodies was increased to 30%. At present, Armenia also has the first woman elected mayor and one member of the current cabinet is a woman (Ministry of Health). Armenia is

very much committed to support the global efforts for gender equality, enhancement of opportunities and empowerment of women in all spheres of public life and to contribute, both globally and on national level, to the achievement of these goals. The main guarantor of gender equality in Armenia is the country's Constitution, which states that "Discrimination based on sex or other social circumstances shall be prohibited". (Article 86) and "Women and men shall enjoy legal equality". One of the main objectives of state policy is "promoting actual equality between women and men" (Article 30), which allows for the development and introduction of more effective mechanisms, policies and programmes. National legislation, including the Law "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men" adopted in 2013, endorses the idea of 'equality' of rights for all in all spheres of public life and legal protection of all from gender discrimination, and the government's ongoing policy and reforms are consistent with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly against the gender-related indicators of the SDGs.

4.2 Policy changes

The first priority of the gender strategy is to increase the involvement of women in the decision-making process. In this regard, with the support of an international partner, various programmes are being implemented: "Women in Politics", "Women in Local Democracy", "Women's Leadership Schools", the main goal of which is to increase the involvement of women in decision-making.

As presented by the Civil Service Office of the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, a statistical database of civil servants by gender has been created since 2020, which will allow to have gender-disaggregated statistics on civil servants in all government. Within the framework of this priority, it is envisaged to activate gender commissions under the regional administrations and to improve the quality of work. Within the framework of the second priority, state programmes aimed at developing the working skills and abilities of young mothers, increasing women's competitiveness in the market, combining family, work and childcare have been implemented.

4.3 Institutional changes

As mentioned in 1.2 various state programmes have been developed in all spheres of public and political life, to ensure the involvement of women in the decision-making process (vocational training programmes, childcare support programmes).

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Actions aimed at the prevention of discrimination are carried out. The preventive measures are both of general nature (awareness-raising, legal reforms, advocacy, etc.), as well as targeted and specific (enhanced employment opportunities for women, enhanced opportunities in education, reduction of cases of sex-selective abortions, etc.). Preventive interventions are implemented both by the state in co-operation non-governmental and international organisations, as previously mentioned.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

The implementation of the gender-sensitive budgeting is aimed at ensuring a balanced distribution of resources and opportunities. In this regard, in the framework of public budget management policy reforms in Armenia, elements of gender-sensitive budgeting have already been fully introduced in the process of elaborating the state budget, making the state budget gender-sensitive, which will help to reduce gender gaps in all spheres of public life.

6.2 Policy changes

As mentioned in 1.2, the Council for Women's Affairs is established as a national mechanism that supports the introduction of mechanisms for the inclusion of women's social and political resources in the democratisation process of society, ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men. The purpose of the council is to support the implementation of "strategic" tactical programmes for the development of women's issues in the Republic of Armenia, issues related to

gender equality, gender discrimination and violence. Representatives from stakeholder state bodies, non-governmental and international organisations can participate in the activities of the council.

6.3 Institutional changes

As mentioned in 1.2, the Interagency Working Group operates with the purpose of organising the ongoing activities of the Council.

The council may set up temporary thematic groups to address individual or pressing issues related to equal opportunities for women and men at the suggestion and participation of non-board professionals, the business community, and representatives of international NGOs.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Gender mainstreaming is underway. A significant achievement was the ensuring of gender sensitivity of the programmes included in the state budget, in 2020, training courses were held for the representatives of state structures implementing gender strategy measures on the implementation of the gender-sensitive budgeting process. Gender-sensitive indicators have been added to the programmes of all government agencies, a gender-sensitive budgeting approach has been introduced, reflecting the directions of the gender strategy.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

In 2020, UNDP undertook Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Stemming from it, in 2021 the PGA recommendations are being implemented. In addition, with UNDP's support a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was introduced at the ministry, a gender mainstreaming consultant was hired to support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs by providing technical assistance in institutionalising, capacity building for mainstreaming gender in all relevant policies and programmes, including those related to GIA and the internal complaint mechanism against gender-based discrimination.

AUSTRIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The drafting process of a **legislative package to combat hatred (including sexism) on internet platforms** is currently ongoing.

In September 2020, a public consultation was launched to a draft Federal Act implementing measures to combat hate on the Internet (Hate on the Internet Combating Act). In November 2020, the government has agreed upon sending this piece of legislation to the parliament, where it is expected to be concluded in December 2020 and to enter into force by 1 January 2021.

The measures foreseen aim at strengthening personal rights, simplifying law enforcement and expanding victim protection in this field.

In the field of **civil law**, the new measures include regulations regarding the protection of personal rights and the scope of the claimant's standing to sue. If an employee's personal rights are violated in the media (including over social media) in connection with his profession, and this behaviour also has an impact on the employer (for example if the work is not done because the employee suffers), the employer is also entitled to claim injunction and removal. If harm is caused in the media (including over social media), the compensation for non-material damage will be facilitated. A simplified injunction procedure for hate posts will be introduced including the possibility of immediate enforceability; this procedure will be affordable through measures like low court fees and no mandatory representation by a lawyer.

In the field of **criminal law**, the foreseen measures include:

- an extension of the provision of "cyberbullying" (§ 107c Austrian Criminal Code, hereinafter CC) in order to make even single cyberbullying-postings punishable;
- an extension of the provision of "hate speech" (§ 283 CC) by also including insults that offend the human dignity and are directed against individual members of protected groups;
- the introduction of a new criminal offence against unauthorised image recording in § 120a CC (so-called "Upskirting");
- the facilitated investigation of perpetrators of offences that are prosecuted only at the request of an authorised person like "Criminal defamation" (§ 111 CC), "Accusation of prior offences that have been served or waived" (§ 113 CC) or "Insult" (§ 115 CC) if the offence was committed by means of telecommunication or using computer systems;
- the elimination of the risk of having to bear the legal costs in the case of an acquittal or a discontinuation of investigation proceedings when the offence is prosecuted at the request of an authorised person like "Criminal defamation" (§ 111 CC), "Accusation of prior offences that have been served or waived" (§ 113 CC) or "Insult" (§ 115 CC) if the offence was committed by means of telecommunication or using computer systems with the exception of cases where false accusations were made intentionally;
- ensuring legal protection for the accused in the event of excessive access to files;
- the explicit inclusion of "other service providers" (corresponding to § 3 sub paragraph 2 of the E-Commerce-Act) in the provision of § 76a Austrian Code of Criminal Procedure (hereinafter CCP) in order to ensure that information on subscriber and access data can also be obtained from internet services, in particular OTT services, which are not providers of communications services;
- in the Media Act an increase in the indemnity for the insult suffered up to a maximum amount of 40,000€, in special cases up to a maximum amount of 100,000 €, as well as an expansion of the scope of withdrawal from circulation and confiscation in the Media Act. A new provision has been drafted in order to enable the enforcement of the withdrawal and confiscation against host providers, if the media owner's registered office is abroad or the media owner cannot be

- prosecuted due to other reasons. Host providers will then be obliged to delete the parts of the website constituting the penal act;
- the extension of the psycho-social and legal support in criminal proceedings for victims of hate on the internet.

1.2 Policy changes

See 4.3: The Austrian government committed to raise the percentage of women on supervisory boards of companies with at least 50% stake held by the federal government to **40%**.

1.3 Institutional changes

Continuation of the **Inter-Ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming/Budgeting** (IMAG GMB). This group supports and facilitates the implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in all federal ministries and at all political levels. In IMAG GMB, all federal ministries, the supreme bodies (public law courts, ombudsman's office, court of auditors, parliament), the public service union and the federal states are represented by commissioners.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In order to further advance the continuous gender-differentiated data collection and data evaluation in Austria, the "**Gender Index**" is produced annually. It provides an overview of gender-disaggregated data in key areas such as education, income, and employment and sheds light on gender relations from various perspectives. On the one hand, by highlighting differences and similarities in the life of women and men. On the other hand, by making visible different situations of women - such as single parents, retired women or women in management positions.

Furthermore, Austria participated in a study on the specific form of cyber domestic violence (see 2.4).

1.5 Other pertinent developments

As of August 2019, the Anti-Sexism Advisory Board (*Anti-Sexismus Beirat*) was again integrated into the complaints procedure of the Austrian Advertising Council.

The Federal Minister for Women and Integration has made 8,600 € available from its budget for the statements of the Anti-Sexism Advisory Board. The contract with the association "*Gesellschaft zur Selbstkontrolle der Werbewirtschaft*" (the decision-making body of the Austrian Advertising Council (ÖWR) is an independent organ of the association "*Gesellschaft zur Selbstkontrolle der Werbewirtschaft*") was limited to 31 July 2020. This contract was extended by one year, until 31 July 2021.

The Chamber of Labour conducted the study "Cases of discrimination in Austria": a telephone survey of people's experience of discrimination and unequal treatment in Austria in the areas of **work, housing, health and education**. Around 2,300 people aged between 14 and 65 participated. They were asked about their experience of discrimination regarding the aspects of gender, marital status, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and social status. The findings were discussed at various events throughout the year and are also mentioned in the report to the National Council regarding the implementation of equal treatment.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The drafting process of a legislative package to combat hatred (including sexism) on internet platforms is currently ongoing (see 1.1. above).

The expansion of counselling services for victims of sexual violence was financed.

The **Violence Protection Act 2019** (Gewaltschutzgesetz 2019, BGBl. I Nr. 105/2019), which entered into force on 1 January 2020, strengthens the **protection from violent crimes and sexual offences**.

The rights of particularly vulnerable victims (victims of sexual offences, of violence in residential dwellings, victims under the age of 18 years, other victims that are granted this status under certain circumstances) were further extended. These victims were granted the additional right to demand that interpreting services shall be provided by a person of the same sex during interrogations in preliminary proceedings and in the main hearing (Sec. 66a paragraph 2 sub paragraph 1a CCP).

Particularly vulnerable victims were explicitly included in the provision of Sec. 250 paragraph 3 CCP which allows questioning in a manner set out in Sec. 165 paragraph 3 CCP in the main hearing (adversarial questioning of a witness in order to avoid secondary victimisation and the direct contact of the witness and the defendant). In addition, it was clarified that witnesses who meet the criteria mentioned in Sec. 66a CCP may be heard adversely (Sec. 165 paragraph 3 CCP) on their request or on the request of the public prosecutor's office.

Section 70 CCP about the victims' right to information was structured in a more understandable way. The phrase "against a particular accused" in the first sentence of Sec. 70 CCP was removed in order to make it explicitly clear that this right is entitled to victims regardless of whether a preliminary investigation is conducted against known or unknown accused persons. Moreover, a postponement of the information to the victim should now only be permissible if there are special reasons to fear that the purpose of the investigations would otherwise be jeopardised.

It was also clarified that victims have the right to receive a written confirmation of their report and the transcript of their interrogation free of charge.

There were also changes in the Criminal Records Act with the intention of further protecting vulnerable persons. For example, a new Certificate of Criminal Records ("Strafregisterbescheinigung Pflege und Betreuung") was provided for persons who want to carry out a certain professional or organised voluntary activity, which mainly comprises the care and support of vulnerable persons.

The Violence Protection Act 2019 also foresees a number of improvements related to **interim injunctions for protection against violence and for protection of privacy**. This includes a higher protection for minors and measures for better interconnectedness, in particular by notifications of family courts as well as the eligibility of children and youth welfare services to file "stalking" interim injunctions for minors. Moreover, an interim injunction can now be adapted to changes of factual circumstances also in purely domestic cases (not only in the framework of the EU Regulation on protection measures), for example, the change of address of the protected home. The "stalking" interim injunction was expanded to "cybermobbing". Furthermore, the court can now impose a restraining order ("no go zone"), which is not restricted to 100 meters or to particular places (for example, 100 metres from the workplace). Finally, the return of previously removed keys, when an interim injunction is lifted, is now regulated in detail. These changes also entered into force on 1 January 2020.

2.2 Policy changes

Awareness raising of the wide public on domestic violence in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

In order to draw attention to the increased risk of domestic violence due to exit restrictions and the support services available, press conferences were regularly held by the Minister for Women's Affairs, the Minister for Family Affairs and the Minister for Justice.

Information flyers on local victim protection centres were distributed in supermarkets, as well as nation-wide brochures in 13 additional languages via internet.

An information campaign was launched in daily newspapers and via media.

The budget for counselling services for women, suffering from domestic violence or fearing domestic violence was increased in order to be prepared for the expected higher workload during the lockdown in spring.

2.3 Institutional changes

Continuation of the Inter-ministerial working group “Protection of Women against Violence”, comprising relevant ministries, all federal states and specific NGOs with its main task being the exchange of expertise and support of implementation measures. Continuation of the National Co-ordination Body “Protection of Women against Violence” with its main tasks being the national co-ordination of state reports under the Istanbul Convention and exchange with other national co-ordination bodies as well as analysis and dissemination of specific data.

Continuation of other relevant Working Groups esp. on Trafficking in Human Beings, Forced Marriage and Victim Oriented Work with Perpetrators.

Continuation of an *ad hoc* working group with the aim to assure accommodation in women’s shelters of high risk victims across Austria’s provinces under the lead of the Division for Women and Equality which was set up in September 2019.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Studies

- Participation in the EU prevalence study “gender-based violence 2020/2021” (“Gender-based violence survey”) - gender-specific violence against women (and men); results are expected in 2022.
- Participation in the study “No room: Cyber violence against women in (ex)-partnerships” 2020/2021 which deems to analyse the specific form of cyber domestic violence; results are expected in 2022.
- Participation in the EIGE prevalence study “Estimation of the number of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the EU” 2020/2021 which will estimate the risk to become a victim of FGM in Austria.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The budget of the Women’s Ministry was increased by 20% to € 12 million, which will largely be used for measures to protect women against violence: All (holistic and violence-specific) women's counselling centres received a 12% budgetary increase this year.

The Ministry for Women’s Affairs launched a call for a project grant over € 1.25 million for projects regarding the protection and prevention of women and girls against violence the first time. A total of 14 projects were selected which will be conducted from 1 October 2020 until 31 December 2021. Furthermore, there was a second project grant over € 2 million regarding projects improving the integration of migrant women and girls with a focus on violence protection. 19 projects were selected.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

In Austria, there are several rights and measures of **protection for victims** in criminal proceedings that may correspond to the specific needs of women, such as:

- Adversarial questioning of a witness in order to avoid secondary victimisation and the direct contact of the witness and the defendant. The participation at the interrogation of other participants in the proceeding may be limited by the use of technical means of audio and visual transmission for following the interrogation and the right to ask questions being exercised

without being present at the interrogation. Moreover, in some cases it is possible to appoint an expert to conduct the interrogation (§ 165 and § 250 CCP).

- If an adversary questioning has taken place, the witness is released from the obligation to further testify and the protocol of the adversary questioning can be read in the main trial phase (§ 252 paragraph 1 sub paragraph 2a CCP) (10.3.)
- According to § 70 CCP, victims have to be informed about their fundamental rights (§§ 66 to 67 CCP) by the criminal investigation authority or the prosecution authority as soon as investigation proceedings are conducted. This may only be omitted as long as special circumstances give reason to fear that the purpose of the investigation would otherwise be jeopardised. § 70 paragraph 1 CCP in conjunction with § 50 paragraph 2 CCP stipulates that the instruction about rights needs to be given in a language that the victim understands and in a comprehensible manner, taking into account any special personal needs of the victim. (10.4.)
- Psycho-social and legal support for the proceedings that is free of charge, if this is necessary to preserve the rights of the victim, taking into account their personal concerns. Some victims are afforded this support in any case (victims whose sexual integrity might have been violated and who are under the age of 14).

Psycho-social support for the proceedings includes the preparation of the of the person concerned for the proceedings and for the emotional stress associated with the proceedings as well as accompanying the person to questioning during investigation proceedings and the main proceedings; legal support for the proceedings includes legal advice and representation by an attorney (§ 66 paragraph 2 CCP).

The Federal Ministry of Justice is authorised to delegate contractually provision of assistance to victims during criminal proceedings, as defined under § 65 sub paragraph 1 letter a or b CCP or victims of terrorist offences (§ 278c Criminal Code) to suitable experienced institutions and has to finance the provision of psychosocial and legal assistance by these institutions. Many of these institutions, such as women's shelters, violence prevention centres and intervention centres, are specialised in working with women.

With the Violence Protection Act 2019, the rights of particularly vulnerable victims (victims of sexual offences, of violence in residential dwellings, victims under the age of 18 years, other victims that are granted this status under certain circumstances) were further extended, as outlined above in Answer 2.1.

As regards the **fair treatment of women's cases**, the general rules in the Austrian Criminal Procedure Code, such as the presumption of innocence or the principles of objectivity and exploration of the truth, fair hearing or right to defence (§ 7 CCP) apply to every criminal proceeding in the same way, so that all parties to the proceedings can rely on a fair and equal treatment of their case.

There is only a limited number of parties to the criminal proceedings, which are clearly defined in the CCP and have individual rights in the proceedings depending on their status. However, the main trial generally is public (§ 228 CCP) which means that anyone, including members of groups and civil society organisations, has the possibility attend.

There are no provisions in the CCP that could lead to direct or indirect discrimination against women.

Throughout the **COVID-19 pandemic**, the criminal prosecution of perpetrators and the access to the courts for victims of domestic violence is and has been secured at all times. There are and there were no restrictions in this respect. Victim support organisations were advised on COVID-19 measures at court and prosecution services and are updated regularly.

With a Regulation by the Ministry of Justice on special rules for the filing of court applications (1. COVID-19 Ziviljustiz-VO, BGBl. II Nr. 163/2020), the following measures were taken to make it easier

for victims of violence to obtain interim injunctions for protection against violence during the COVID- 19 related restrictions of the freedom of movement:

- Firstly, victim protection and support facilities have been granted extended powers of representation, as they are able to represent victims of violence to a limited extent, including the filing of applications for interim injunctions for protection against violence and for protection of privacy (pursuant to Sections 382b, 382e and 382g on the Act of the Enforcement of Judgements) and other written pleadings (except for legal remedies). The victim protection and support facility can refer to the granted power of representation without having to show the written mandate to the court.
- Secondly, persons who are in quarantine under the Epidemic Act (Epidemiegesetz) can file an application to obtain an interim injunction for protection against violence through the police. For this purpose, a form was created, that has to be handed out to the victim along with an information sheet after the police has issued an expulsion and prohibition to return order. The documents were translated into six languages. After the application to obtain an interim injunction is handed over to the police, the expulsion and prohibition to return order is automatically extended by two weeks. The police has to submit the application including documentation (for example, the report of the incident) immediately to the court, if possible via the electronic legal communications system.

The regulation entered into force on 21 April 2020 and is valid until 31 December 2020. It will, however, presumably be prolonged until mid-2021.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

The Act on Equality between Women and Men in Supervisory Boards was adopted in June 2017. (Since 1 January 2018, there must be at least 30% women on the supervisory boards of publicly traded companies and companies with more than 1,000 employees. This quota applies to new members. Existing mandates remain unaffected.) The Chamber of Labour monitors the effect of this quota in their “Women Management Report”: Since 2018, the share of women in the supervisory boards increased from 22.4% to 31.7%.

4.3 Institutional changes

The **Council of Ministers' resolution of 3 June 2020** stipulated that the proportion of women in state-owned companies should be increased to 40%. According to the progress report 2020 (reporting period: 1 January to 31 December 2019), the proportion of women on the supervisory boards of state-owned companies (at least 50% stake held by the federal government) averaged 43.3%.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

In July 2020 the Progress Report 2020 on increasing the proportion of women in the supervisory boards of state-owned companies (at least 50% stake held by the federal government) was published.

As part of the Federal Civil Service's staff development programme, a cross-mentoring scheme is available as a tool for the promotion of women's careers.

One distinctive feature of this particular cross-mentoring scheme is that managers from one Ministry (i.e. the mentors) support their female colleagues from other Ministries (i.e. the mentees). This is a specific programme to support women in their career with around 30% of the mentors being male. The mentors pass on their experience and know-how, give advice on career planning and facilitate access to professional networks. Since 2005, about 1200 mentors and mentees have participated in the programme.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

The Federal Ministry of the Interior attaches particular importance to gender equality and fair and careful treatment of vulnerable groups, in particular women and (potential) victims of violence. The special needs of vulnerable persons are always given special consideration, especially during the asylum procedure.

5.2 Policy changes

As a step in the implementation of the “50-Point-Plan towards Integration of those entitled to asylum and to subsidiary protection in Austria”⁷ in 2015, a working group of the independent expert council for integration created the concept of so called “Values and Orientation Courses”: Central components of the courses contain information about the importance of the rule of law and principles, basic values of the Austrian constitution, esp. such as equality between men and women, human dignity and democratic principles.

These courses are legally stipulated in the “[Integration Act 2017](#)” and offered for persons entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection as well as asylum seekers admitted to the procedure from the age of 15. In the courses held in German, interpreters for the most common languages of origin such as Arabic, Farsi/Dari and English are available for participants who still have little knowledge of the German language. The learning material for the course was prepared in simple German as well as in Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Pashto, English and Russian. The courses are seminar-like and take place in small groups of around 15 people, with lecture and discussion elements alternating. Women and men take part in the courses together.

Advanced courses to main topics such as equal rights between women and men are offered by the “[Austrian Integration Fund \(ÖIF\)](#)”.

All courses mentioned are free of charge.

Possible vulnerability of asylum seekers is taken into consideration during the whole asylum procedure. For example, the procedural instructions of the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (first instance asylum authority) provides special guidelines for the interview of vulnerable groups (e.g. unaccompanied minors, victims of human trafficking, victims of violence). Furthermore, a possible vulnerability is taken into account when finding appropriate accommodation and care facilities.

If, for example, during a personal interview, indications occur that the individual is a victim or witness of human trafficking, the State Office of Criminal Investigation will be informed. This Office contacts the responsible institution for victim protection (LEFÖ-IBF), which is available 24/7. The obligatory instruction manual of the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum provides checklists for the practical identification of victims of human trafficking (forms of appearance, determination) and for coping strategies (first measures, information of responsible authorities including contact details of competent authorities). In cases where an asylum seeker bases his/her fear of persecution on infringement of his/her right to sexual self-determination, he/she shall – by law – be interviewed by an official of the same sex unless he/she requests otherwise. The same applies for the sex of the interpreter and the typist.



6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Gender equality is an important aspect of performance management in Austria, which is a results-oriented strategy on the federal level of government. The budgetary principle of promoting gender equality was incorporated in the Austrian Constitution in 2009 and came into effect in 2013 by introducing the Federal Budget Act. Another important legal framework is the regulatory impact assessments principles regulation in which the federal chancellery (in accordance with the federal ministry of finance) defines the dimensions for the impact assessment (see below). Additionally, the Federal Ministries Act gives responsibility to the Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport for the cross-ministry co-ordination of actual gender equality.

The system of performance management has two distinct instruments: performance budgeting and regulatory impact assessments. Both instruments play a crucial role in achieving gender equality in Austria. The progress of gender equality is evaluated and reported annually.

The instrument of performance budgeting ensures that all ministries and supreme organs define gender-related outcome objectives, measures and indicators. The Federal Budget Act includes different sub-divisions. Each sub-division can define up to five impact goals. One out of the five goals shall be gender-related. In the 2020 budget, 33 divisions defined gender-related impact goals. This significantly increases the transparency of government action in this field and guarantees the integration of gender perspectives in all areas of policy making.

The instrument of regulatory impact assessments analyses the impact of different measures taken by the government. The impact is analysed by means of different dimensions (eight in total). One of the dimensions is gender-equality. Hence, the impact assessment includes a mandatory gender impact dimension for all regulatory impact assessments. All new laws, regulations and projects, in all fields, need to be analysed concerning their impact on equality. This entrenches the awareness for equality throughout the public administration and consequently raises the need to invest in skills to analyse these impacts.

6.3 Institutional changes

Continuation of the **Inter-Ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming/Budgeting** (IMAG GMB). All federal ministries, the supreme bodies (public law courts, ombudsman's office, Court of Auditors, parliament), the public service union and the federal states are represented in IMAG GMB by commissioners.

IMAG's tasks include the exchange of information and initiatives worthy of imitation in the departments as well as domestic and foreign best practice examples, the development of criteria for the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy and the monitoring and evaluation of ongoing projects, measures and laws with regard to the application of gender mainstreaming objectives.

Cross-ministry co-ordination of actual gender equality. The focus of management in public administration underwent a major shift with the introduction of impact orientation. The commitment to actual gender equality – which is enshrined in the constitution – was also taken into consideration in this process. As a result, at least one gender equality target must be specified for each subdivision during the budgeting process – including associated figures and measures. The co-ordination of this process includes both the compilation and evaluation of the gender equality impact data. The aim is to promote cross-ministerial co-operation, increase the relevance to governance, improve the underlying data and consolidate quality at a high level.

There is no systematic connection between performance management regulated by the Federal Budget Act (see 6.1) and the SDGs. Nevertheless, different connecting dots between the national law and the SDGs can be observed. For example, the instrument of performance budgeting ensures that

all ministries and supreme organs define gender-related outcome objectives, measures and indicators. Those objectives, measures and indicator have to be defined according to specific quality criteria. One of those quality criteria is comprehensibility. The basis of comprehensibility can be different legal instruments as a government resolution. In Austria the coherent implementation of the “Agenda 2030” constitutes a government resolution. Hence, there is a connection to the SDGs, even though it is not formalised yet.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The “**Equality in discussion**” series of events has been organised by the Section for Women's Affairs and Equality since 2013 at the suggestion of IMAG GMB. It deals primarily with the topic of gender equality in legal terms and with regard to their personal and professional development potential in a society.

<https://www.imag-gmb.at/service/projekt/veranstaltungsreihe-gleichstellung-im-gespraech.html>

In addition to their basic training, all Austrian public servants are encouraged to undergo regular training. The Federal Administrative Academy offers a wide range of gender mainstreaming-related training programmes, including working with the Federal Act for Equal Treatment; gender competence; gender equality, social injustice and societal emancipation; gender mainstreaming; gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women: contradictory or complementary?; paternity leave, etc.

Furthermore, there are three to seven Equal Opportunity Officers within each ministry, who are appointed for five years. Their responsibilities include all questions regarding gender equality, women empowerment, and the equal treatment irrespective of ethnicity, religion, worldview, age, or sexual orientation, within their respective administrative area.

Please also see section 6.5. The below mentioned publications are published on the Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport's website and usually gain attention by the Austrian media.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

Austria's first [Voluntary National Review \(VNR\)](#) of the Implementation of the SDGs was presented in July 2020 at the High-level Political Forum. The review explored three key issues in greater detail, one of which was “Women, youth, and ‘leaving no-one behind’”. Both progress as well as challenges regarding Goal 5, Gender Equality, were explored in the report and equality of women and men was emphasised as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Austria's Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming measures are regularly monitored via various complementary instruments and reported upon through different channels.

The “Federal Equal Treatment Report” (based on §12 Federal Equal Treatment Act – Bundes-Gleichbehandlungsgesetz) presents annual updates and statistics on gender equality and women empowerment measures within the Austrian public service, as well as the activities carried out by the Federal Equal Treatment Commission.

(Source:

https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/publikationen/13_Gleichbehandlungsbericht_des_Bundes_2020_Druckversion.pdf?7qkoeo)

The publication “Federal Personnel”, which is also published annually, features numbers and statistics on female and male civil servants, the share of female civil servants over time, higher education of women and men in the public vs. the private sector, part-time employment per gender, women in leadership positions, measures for women empowerment, maternity and paternity leave as well as income differences between women and men, etc.

(Source:

https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/fakten/publikationen/PJB_2019_Daten_und_Fakten.pdf?79nlig)

The “Federal Income Report” (based on §6 Federal Equal Treatment Act – Bundes-Gleichbehandlungsgesetz) includes the gender pay gap for Austrian civil servants of various sectors and hierarchical levels and is published annually in October.

(Source:

https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/fakten/einkommensbericht/Einkommensbericht_2020.pdf?7p3x0f)

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The Equal Treatment Ombud plays an important role when it comes to support, counselling and awareness raising in order to combat discrimination. However, it has been a long-term request to strengthen the role of the Equal Treatment Ombud. This was incorporated in the current government programme as one of the initiatives to promote equality.

AZERBAIJAN

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

On 3 March 2020, the Azerbaijan Government approved the **Action Plan on the prevention of gender-biased sex selection for the period of 2020-2025**. This action plan combines a series of important activities and measures to be implemented and to promote the value of girl child

The draft National Action Plan on Gender Equality in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2020-2024 has been developed by The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs. It was prepared according to implementation of Clause 7.4 of the Development Concept “Azerbaijan - 2020: Outlook for the Future” with the purpose to improve legislation on gender equality and women's rights, raising awareness, strengthening combating gender-based violence, promoting women's entrepreneurship, enhancing women's competitiveness at the labour market, preventing and eliminating gender stereotypes, eliminating school drop outs and cases of early marriages. The draft was revised and submitted to the government organisation and the text of the National Action Plan was agreed with the relevant authorities. It is now at the Cabinet of Ministers waiting for final approval.

1.2 Policy changes

1. **A guideline on "Practical Recommendations for the Implementation of Gender Equality Policy in Municipalities"** was prepared .to ensure gender equality in the local authorities and to improve the mechanism for the protection of women's rights. “A Brief Review of the Current Situation Conditioned by Legal and Institutional Mechanisms” elaborated and developed by an expert group under “Good Local Self-Government Programme”.
2. **A draft Action Plan to Increase Women's Employment in the Republic of Azerbaijan** has been prepared with the purpose to increase women's access to the labour market, identify and eliminate gender-based factors that prevent women from building successful careers in the private sector, take advantage of existing employment opportunities, provide them with decent jobs.
3. According to paragraph 5 of the Resolution of the Board of the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 7 August 2020, No. 56-2 “On measures taken to implement the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan” On Ensuring Gender Equality “and important documents prepared”, the SCFWCA has drafted “**Curriculum on gender equality for civil servants within the process of admission, promotion and professional development in the civil service of the Republic of Azerbaijan**”, **instruction and training modules regulating the activities of persons responsible for gender equality (focal points)** and sent for adoption to the Cabinet of Ministers the Curriculum for Civil Servants on gender issues, the Training Module for Civil Service Trainers and the Instruction regulating the activities of gender responsible persons. These documents were prepared by the experts from the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs, Gender and Applied Psychology Department of Baku State University the Civil Service Department of the State Examination Centre of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1.3 Institutional changes

The Council of Europe organised a project on “Reinforcing gender equality and other ethical standards in Azerbaijani media” on 6 November 2019 in Baku, with the aims to review the legal framework on media from a gender equality perspective and to provide recommendations to bring these in line with European standards; to conduct data collection on gender in the Azerbaijani media; to raise awareness on Council of Europe standards on gender equality and media freedom among journalists and law professionals; and to improve the quality of journalism education by developing textbooks on “Journalism ethics” and “Gender equality and media freedom”. It is a follow-up project of the

previous Council of Europe project on “Gender equality and media freedom in Azerbaijan” implemented from March 2018 to June 2019.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan has introduced an online course on “**Ensuring Gender Equality in Local Self-Government: Achievements and Positive Practices.**”

“**Enhancing the role of Civil society in implementing gender sensitive sustainable development goals**” project supported by the European Union and the UNDP, to promote the effective and active participation of civil society in the elaboration and implementation of the gender-sensitive national agenda for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“**EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence**” programme, which is funded by the European Union, and jointly implemented by UN Women and UNFPA, with support from the Centre for Social Research, a local research institution based in Azerbaijan. This programme seeks to strengthen equal rights and opportunities for women and men by shifting social perceptions around gender roles, tackling gender stereotypes and increasing men’s participation in childcare and other domestic responsibilities.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The “**National Action Plan on combating human trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019-2023**” was adopted in July 2020

Draft of **National Action Plan for 2020–2023 in Elimination of Domestic Violence** has been revised and by the relevant state agencies several times and finally is at the Cabinet of Ministers waiting for final approval.

2.2. Policy changes

On 24 November 2020, USAID, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and UNDP launched a new project to help address gender-based violence in Azerbaijan. The goal of the project is to promote reintegration and empowerment of women and girls, suffering from all types of domestic violence (physical, sexual, economic or psychological). The project will focus on providing access to quality services for women who experienced domestic violence through the Women Resource Centres (WRCs). The project will put the needs of DV survivors at the centre of its activities and use people-centred framework in building better support and reintegration services for women and girls suffering from the domestic violence. The results generated by the project will increase the chances of women and girls to live lives free from violence and threats and make their own choices. “**Stand Up for Women and Girls**” will also support innovation by tapping into the latest technology to help develop apps and platforms to ensure safer public spaces for women. The project works on changing attitudes and behaviour by providing education to prevent violence against women through community-based sessions and advocacy campaigns.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs holds online meetings to support the protection of the rights of women victims of domestic violence, sheltered in special premises. The meetings are attended by the Legal Department of the Committee, of the Main Investigation and Interrogation Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Employment Policy and Demographic Development Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, the Social Security Policy Department of the MLSP, representative of the State Employment Service, chairs of the shelters and others.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (SCFWCA) sent an appeal to the Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers on issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as in response to calls from the UN Secretary General to the governments. Thus, based on the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan **“On Prevention of Domestic Violence”**, this appeal was directed on strengthening the activities of relevant government agencies to prevent domestic violence and ensure the safety of victims of domestic violence, prompt investigation of appeals and taking preventive measures by the law enforcement agencies and local executive authorities, provide information on domestic violence and, provision of operative and urgent assistance to victims of domestic violence by the relevant executive authorities are the main priorities during the pandemic.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

- **EU Twinning project “Strengthening the capacity of State bodies and local level referral mechanisms to provide safety and support to victims of domestic violence in Azerbaijan”** has been started since September 2020.
- European Union and Council of Europe joint action **“Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan”**. The action started in July 2020 and will run until December 2021.
- A **new GBV hotline** on the basis of a state-based 3-digit national and easily remembered free telephone line will start to operate from 15 December 2020.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

On 29 March 2019, the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted a new modern law on mediation as a part of ongoing court and legal reforms. One of the important features of the law is requirement for the parties to participate in an initial mediation session before applying to the court for disputes arising under family or employment relations.

3.2 Policy changes

The State Programme on the Development of Justice in Azerbaijan 2019-2023 was adopted. In the framework of this state programme the work on “Deepening Reforms in the Judicial-Legal System” has been started. It includes increasing the professional skills of justice workers and judges, raising public awareness about various fields of law, establishment of the Electronic Court Information System and “Deepening Reforms in the Judicial-Legal System”. It will promote mediation services.

3.3 Institutional changes

The Government of Azerbaijan jointly with the World Bank worked out the project on Justice Services and Smart Infrastructure with the goal to envisage the measures aimed at building new courthouses and compounds, forming the e-justice information system and wider use of other leading ICT means. It should enhance justice service delivery to citizens and continue the support for the legal aid programme for vulnerable groups in small towns and rural areas. This goal is expected to be achieved also by extending the efficiency and accessibility gains of the e-Courts.

The Prosecutor General's Office has appointed special focal points dealing with issues of violence and gender-based discrimination and a division on work with the monitoring groups on gender-based violence and violence against children.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

A special *Training Manual for Judges and Prosecutors on Ensuring Women's Access to Justice* was prepared. It covers the conceptual framework on women's access to justice, including through issues of women's human rights, non-discrimination and gender stereotyping in the judiciary; international and national standards including on domestic violence, sexual violence, and harmful practices; as well

as other legal and procedural issues, including evidentiary questions, remedies, sentencing and enforcement of judgments, interactions with women victims and witnesses, and gender-sensitive courtroom management, among others. Judges of Azerbaijan take part in an intensive training seminar on “Ensuring Women’s Access to Justice” at the Academy of Justice with the goal to strengthen the capacity of future judges to ensure a gender-responsive approach in their work and to promote an impartial, fair and just system that provides legal protection and remedies to all, including women experiencing human rights violations, in areas such as domestic violence, sexual violence and family law.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

Project on strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan in introducing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and provision of legal aid services to the population (October 2019-October 2021).

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

A three-phase project under the “Good Governance Programme for Local Development in the South Caucasus” with the support of the German Organisation for International co-operation (GIZ) .In a frame work of the project, The State Committee for Family, Women and Children’s Affairs, has launched an online training on “Analysis of Gender Issues for Gender co-ordinators” covering all regions and cities of the country. An online training is being held with the joint participation of Deputy Heads of Executive Power for Socio-Political and Humanitarian Affairs, heads of departments and other employees of Executive Power, mayors and executive representatives of local authorities and heads of municipalities – the executive representatives responsible for gender issues in 67 regions. The training included analysis of gender issues, SWOT analysis of the inclusion of gender equality in the action plans. strategies, gender sensitivity indicators, etc. In the third phase of the project, it is envisaged to establish gender commissions in municipalities in 12 regions and cities of the country as a pilot initiative.

The conference on “Gender Equality Policy in Local Self-Government” was held on 1 July 2020 with the participation of members of parliament, deputy heads of all executive authorities and heads of municipalities

BELGIUM

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Fédération Wallonnie-Bruxelles (French speaking community) (FWB)

Adoption du Décret relatif à l'élaboration du Plan « Droits des Femmes » de la Communauté française (27.04.2020) comprenant la lutte contre les stéréotypes sexistes.

1.2 Policy changes

Flemish Government

In October 2020 the first Flemish action plan on Sexual Violence was launched. Primary focus is a stronger first-line support system for victims and loved ones, reinforcing the hotline 1712, increasing and professionalizing support and assistance and offender treatment.

<https://www.departementwvg.be/nieuws/eerste-actieplan-tegen-seksueel-geweld-een-feit#:~:text=Een%20sterker%20slachtofferonthaal%20voor%20slachtoffers,ter%20bestrijding%20van%20Seksueel%20Geweld.>

The Flemish government will invest 9 mio € recurrent financing in the Family Justice Centres, to reform and expand the functioning of the FJC (comprehensive approach on domestic violence – in Antwerp, Mechelen, Turnhout and Hasselt).

FWB

Adoption du Plan Droit des femmes par le gouvernement de la Communauté Française, le 17 septembre 2020. Ce plan s'articule autour de 4 axes, déclinés en une série de mesures dans une perspective intersectionnelle, chacune attribuée à un ou plusieurs membres du Gouvernement de la Fédération qui seront chargés plus spécifiquement de sa mise en œuvre :

1. Lutter contre les violences faites aux femmes
2. Déconstruire les stéréotypes et agir sur les représentations
3. Assurer une meilleure représentation des femmes dans tous les secteurs professionnels et à tous les niveaux dans les instances de décision et les postes à responsabilités
4. Faciliter la conciliation vie privée – vie professionnelle

Au sein de l'**Axe 2**, on retrouve toute une série de mesures dont notamment les mesures suivantes :

- Sensibilisation du grand public aux rapports de pouvoir et aux stéréotypes de genre ;
- Le renforcement de la formation initial et continue des enseignant-e-s e et du personnel de l'accueil de la petite enfance à la dimension de genre et aux violences basées sur le genre (est prévu dans cette formation la déconstruction des stéréotypes sexistes) ;
- Lutte contre le sexisme dans la publicité, etc.

Lien vers le Plan Droits des Femmes 2020-2024.

En lien avec le Plan Droits des Femmes 2020-2024, la Communauté française a adopté le 17 novembre 2020 le **Plan Sport au féminin** visant à renforcer la pratique sportive des filles et des femmes ainsi que la participation des femmes dans la gouvernance des fédérations sportives.

1.3 Institutional changes

FWB

Enseignement supérieur

Création d'une Commission permanente « Genre en enseignement supérieur » au sein de l'Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur (ARES) par le Gouvernement de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. Cette Commission rassemblera des représentant-e-s des universités, des hautes écoles et des écoles supérieures des arts et aura pour objectif de soutenir les établissements dans leur lutte contre les inégalités et les discriminations entre les femmes et les hommes dans l'enseignement supérieur. Cette commission constituera un espace de discussion privilégié autour de la thématique du genre et traitera de problématiques transversales parmi lesquelles :

- Le harcèlement au sein des établissements d'enseignement supérieur (universités, hautes écoles et écoles supérieures des arts).
- La formation des professionnels à la détection et l'accompagnement des victimes de violences.
- La réduction des déséquilibres filles/garçons au sein des différentes filières d'enseignement, en particulier les STEM (sciences, technologies, ingénieurs et mathématiques), et le recueil de données statistiques et indicateurs en la matière.

Aussi, l'extension du réseau de personnes de contact genre existant actuellement au sein des Universités à l'ensemble de l'enseignement supérieur (hautes écoles et écoles supérieures des arts) a été adoptée. Ces personnes de contact genre sont notamment chargées de travailler sur toutes questions relatives au harcèlement au sein des établissements d'enseignement supérieur.

Enseignement obligatoire

Mise en place d'un groupe de travail pour le développement d'un **Portail d'information unique sur l'orientation scolaire**. La réduction des inégalités produites par les mécanismes d'orientation scolaire, dont les inégalités entre filles et garçons, est un axe majeur de réflexion de ce groupe de travail.

Numérique

En 2020, la Communauté française a participé aux travaux du Comité Women in Digital, Comité de pilotage inter-administration institué par le SPF Emploi et SPF Economie. Cette participation fait suite à la signature par la Belgique de la Déclaration « Commitment on women in Digital » de l'Union européenne en 2019. Ces travaux ont porté sur l'élaboration d'un plan quinquennal en faveur des femmes dans le domaine des STEM/TIC, intitulé « *Women in digital. National and inter-sectoral strategy 2020-2025* ». Ce plan détermine cinq objectifs stratégiques permettant de lutter contre les obstacles structurels à la participation des femmes au monde numérique : éveiller l'intérêt des jeunes filles pour les STEM/TIC, favoriser l'insertion des femmes dans les emplois liés aux STEM/TIC, travailler toute une carrière dans les STEM/TIC, construire de nouvelles images, faire en sorte que toutes les femmes disposent de « Basic Skills ».

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Federal Government

- The Institute for the equality of women and men published a recommendation in March 2020 calling for stronger punishment of sexist hate speech (https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/avis_et_recommandations/le_renforcement_du_cadre_legislatif_et_de_la_politique_de_poursuite_en).

- In April 2020, the Institute for the equality of women and men launched a national survey about sexism in Belgium. In the autumn, the analysis of the collected data started (<https://www.sexism.be/>).
- The Institute for the equality of women and men provided the Council of Europe with a Dutch translation of its on preventing and combating sexism in the summer of 2020.

Flemish Government

- New policy line focusing on the active role of fathers and a better combination of work and private life for men and women. For example, project financing for ‘Vaderklap’, where a web forum was set up to share experiences about active fatherhood.
- Expanding the reach of genderklik.be. The website is an instrument in the fight to eliminate gender stereotypes in society and helps you to make the “gender click” (get aware of the impact of gender norms) in a fun and interactive way. By using social media like Facebook, users are directed towards the website where they can find information related to the topics raised on social media. www.genderklik.be and www.facebook.com/genderklik/
- Research “The relational, sexual and gender imaging, and the relational, sexual and gender experiences of young people in contexts with a different sex composition.” The purpose of this report was to explore the connection between the school composition and various outcomes and attitudes among young people with regard to relational, sexual and gender perception, and relational sexual and gender experience. The report was finalised by Cudos/University of Ghent in December 2019.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

FWB

Education

La Communauté française a poursuivi en 2020 son projet de **module de formation initiale et continuée des enseignant-e-s « Filles-Garçons une même école »** www.egalitefillesgarçons.be, un outil en ligne de formation initiale et continuée de sensibilisation et d’information du corps éducatif sur la question des inégalités filles-garçons et du sexisme à l’école. Cet outil est développé en collaboration avec le secteur associatif (L’Université des Femmes) et est cofinancé par le Fonds Social Européen programmation 2014-2020 (FSE). Il permet aux (futur-e-s) enseignant-e-s des niveaux maternel, primaire, secondaire et supérieur et personnes actives dans l’encadrement d’enfants et des adolescente-e-s (puériculteurs et puéricultrices, éducateurs et éducatrices, etc.) de développer un enseignement plus égalitaire, dénués de stéréotypes sexistes.

Jeunesse

La Communauté française a poursuivi en 2020 son programme de labellisation des organismes réalisant des animations, formations et outils d’éducation à la vie relationnelle, affective et sexuelle (EVRAS) dans le secteur de la jeunesse ainsi que son dispositif de financement d’opérateurs du Secteur de la Jeunesse et d’opérateurs labellisés EVRAS Jeunesse par le lancement d’un appel à projets annuel. En 2020, 17 projets ont été financés, parmi ces projets 16 projets répondaient à l’attention particulière de l’année et proposaient des actions et projets (animations, formations et outils) visant spécifiquement les questions d’orientation sexuelle et la prévention des inégalités et discriminations sexistes et homophobes.

Media

En septembre 2020, la Communauté française a lancé un appel à projets visant à lutter contre le sexisme et les violences faites aux femmes dans le secteur des médias. Celui-ci avait pour but de soutenir le développement, par des associations, organisations, institutions travaillant directement ou indirectement sur le terrain des droits des femmes ou des discriminations ou des mouvements

féminins et féministes non lucratifs, de projets visant à lutter contre ces multiples formes de sexisme et de violences faites aux femmes dans la sphère médiatique.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Federal Government

On 4 May 2020, a federal law to combat non-consensual dissemination of sexual images and recordings (so called vengeance porn) was adopted. It criminalises the distribution of image and or sound recordings of sexual nature of a person without their consent. It also extended the legal mission of the Institute for the equality of women and men so that it can support victims of vengeance porn from 1 July 2020.

FWB

Adoption du Décret relatif à l'élaboration du Plan « Droits des Femmes » de la Communauté française (27 avril 2020) dont son axe 2 relatif à la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes.

2.2 Policy changes

Federal Government

- The Circular COL 18/2012 on temporary prohibition of residence in cases of domestic violence was revised in March 2020.
- The Circular COL 15/2020 has been adopted in June 2020. This circular entitled "Risk evaluation tool – Directives from the College of Public Prosecutors General aiming to spread the use of a first-line risk evaluation tool for use in cases involving intimate partner violence among police services and public prosecutor's offices" will come into force on 1 January 2021.
- A pilot project for a mobile stalking alarm has been launched throughout 2020. This project introduced a consisting, for victims, in wearing, wherever they are, an alarm button on which they can press when they feel threatened by the person who harasses them, namely their ex-partner. When a call is received, a police patrol is sent as soon as possible to the victim's location.
- On 20 November 2020, the federal Council of Ministers approved a federal action plan to combat gender and domestic violence in the context of the COVID-19.

FWB

Actions et campagne de communication liée à la Crise du COVID-19 :

1. Mise en place d'une Task force « Femmes et violence conjugale et intrafamiliale », associant des Ministres issus de 4 Gouvernements (Communauté française : Ministre des Droits des Femmes, Ministre de l'aide à la Jeunesse et des Maisons de Justice ; Région wallonne : Ministre de l'Egalité des Chances et des Droits des Femmes ; Région de Bruxelles-Capitale : Ministre Des Droits des Femmes ; Commission Communautaire française : Ministre chargée de la Promotion de la Santé, de la Famille). L'objectif principal de cette *task force*, toujours active, vise principalement à suivre la situation des refuges pour femmes et enfants victimes de violences conjugales (en terme de places disponibles), de coordonner les initiatives d'accueil d'urgence, de s'informer sur les services d'assistance en partenariat avec les actrices et acteurs de terrain, ainsi que d'identifier les besoins et les urgences qui se présentent afin d'y répondre rapidement et efficacement.
2. Les quatre entités fédérées se sont associées pour diffuser largement de l'information sur les numéros d'urgences (policière et ambulance) et de services d'aides relatifs à la violence conjugale, la violence intrafamiliale, la violence sexuelle, la maltraitance infantile, le burn-out parental, les idées suicidaires, le besoin d'écoute, ...
3. Dans le cadre de cette Task Force, un visuel statique et animé promouvant ces différents numéros ainsi qu'un spot TV et radio « Rien ne justifie la violence conjugale », ont été réalisés et largement

diffusés sur les chaînes TV et radio francophones belges, ainsi que sur une chaîne radio et TV néerlandophone de Bruxelles.

4. Il y a également eu une large diffusion des visuels au sein du secteur de la santé, la jeunesse, l'aide à la jeunesse, la petite enfance, le sport, l'éducation permanente, la police, l'aide sociale, secteur associatif, médias, ...

Dans le cadre du Plan Droits des femmes adopté par le gouvernement de la Communauté Française, le 17 septembre 2020 et son axe 1^{er} *Lutter contre les violences faites aux femmes*, plusieurs mesures phares seront mises en place, par exemple : une meilleure prévention de la violence faite aux femmes à travers des campagnes de sensibilisation, un renforcement de l'aide aux victimes, y compris de cyberharcèlement via notamment le lancement d'appels à projets ; la lutte contre les stéréotypes de genre dès la petite enfance ; le renforcement de l'aide au soutien des victimes, ...

Accéder au Plan Droits des Femmes

En septembre 2020, la Communauté française a lancé un appel à projets visant à lutter contre les violences faites aux femmes et aux filles dans un contexte post-Covid.

Élaboration du Plan intrafrancophone (Communauté française, Région Wallonne et Cocof) de lutte contre les violences sexistes et intrafamiliales 2020-2024 sur base de la consultation du secteur associatif et des recommandations élaborées par la société civile dans le cadre des rapports alternatifs transmis au GREVIO dans le cadre de l'évaluation de la Belgique au regard de ses obligations envers la Convention d'Istanbul. Adoption prévue en novembre 2020.

2.3 Institutional changes

Belgium

In December 2019, an Inter-ministerial Conference on Women's Rights was created, gathering the members of government in charge of gender equality of the Federal level and the different federated entities and several other members of government whose portfolios are important to achieving gender equality. While it doesn't exclusively deal with gender-based violence, the inter-ministerial conference focused in 2020 on the fight against gender-based violence in order to give effect to the recommendation of GREVIO to achieve a more coherent policy for the entire country. Working groups were formed for the 4 Ps of the Istanbul Convention.

FWB

Mise en place d'une Task force « Violence conjugale et intrafamiliale », par la Communauté française, la Région Wallonne, la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale et la Cocof pour répondre aux risques d'amplification des problèmes de violence durant la période de crise sanitaire et de maintien à domicile (voir supra).

Dans le cadre de la composition du Comité de suivi du Plan Droits des femmes et de la politique de lutte contre les violences envers les femmes, lancement d'un appel à candidature pour des expert.es en violences faites aux femmes, issu.es de la société civile et du secteur académique.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Belgium will participate in a European survey on gender-based violence (Equix) (co-funding as a part of Eurostat's work). The survey will monitor the prevalence and forms of gender-based violence in Belgium and will allow for the comparison with other European countries. (co-operation of all Belgian authorities – federal and federated). The survey is due to be launched in early 2021.

Federal Government

- On 6 February 2020, on the occasion of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation, the Institute for the equality of women and men distributed a document that can help doctors to take active and caring action in the event of suspicions of FGM (https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/code_de_signalement_mutilations_genitales_fe_minines.pdf) and a poster concerning the prevalence of FGM (https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/2019_poster_mgf_fr.pdf).
- In May 2020, the Institute for the equality of women and men supported the campaign #bloomforchange. This campaign called for a stronger policy against sexual violence. It was accompanied by a website where information could be found about 10 action points, where a petition could be found and where campaign materials could be downloaded.
- In the summer of 2020, the Institute for the equality of women and men published a manual to support victims of vengeance porn (https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/manuel_0.pdf).
- The Institute for the equality of women and men organised a conference in October 2019 in order to present a reporting code about forced marriages for civil registrars (https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/publications/code_de_signalement_des_mariages_forces_a_lusage_des_officiers_de_letat_civil).
- The Institute for the equality of women and men organised an online seminar about the sexual assault referral centres on 23 October 2020.

FWB

Organisation de mai à décembre 2019 d'un processus participatif visant à l'intégration de contenus sur les violences faites aux femmes dans l'enseignement supérieur, avec le soutien de l'ARES (Académie de recherche et de l'Enseignement). Au total, 60 représentant.es de l'enseignement supérieur et du milieu associatif expert.es en violences faites aux femmes ont participé à ces ateliers. Ces rencontres se sont distinguées par une forte implication des participant.es, sous-tendue par l'urgence de renforcer la formation initiale des professionnel.es susceptibles d'être confronté.es à la problématique des violences faites aux femmes. Les résultats du processus dont les recommandations ont été adressées aux acteurs concernés et ministres compétents.

Relance sur les réseaux sociaux, via marché public, de la campagne de sensibilisation des jeunes aux violences sexuelles et cyberviolences sexuelles dans leurs relations amoureuses #Arrête, c'est de la violence. www.arrete.be

Flemish Government

- The research conclusions (2018) regarding violence towards women with disabilities are implemented. A first initiative will consist of a practical study about the relational and sexual education for youngsters with a disability.
- Launch of a new research (24 months) about violence faced by LGBTI persons. It will focus on the experiences and impact of violence on LGBTI people and will be able to provide a hysterical evolution in data since the previous research in 2014.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Belgium

In October 2019, Belgium received the evaluation visit of GREVIO. In September 2020, the GREVIO submitted its evaluation report on Belgium's implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

Federal Government

In May 2020, the federal Council of Ministers approved the plan to extend the three existing sexual assault referral centres to 10 centres. In June, the federal Council of Ministers approved the budgetary framework necessary for this extension.

FWB

Le Décret de la Communauté française relatif au Plan Droits des Femmes prévoit notamment le **financement pérenne (5 années) de 5 collectifs d'associations sur les formes de violences suivantes** : violences sexistes et prévention primaire, violences sexuelles, violences conjugales et enfants exposés, MGF, mariages forcés-violences liées à l'honneur. L'appel à candidatures sera lancé en 2021.

En 2020, une convention pluriannuelle a été conclue entre le cabinet de la Ministre des Droits des Femmes de la fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles et l'ASBL Z ! (opérateurs en milieu festifs) pour mettre en place un plan de lutte contre le harcèlement et les agressions en festivals intitulé Plan SACHA⁸. Cette convention permet d'accompagner plusieurs organisateurs de milieux festifs notamment au sein des universités afin d'implémenter de tels plans.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice**3.1 Legislative changes****Federal Government**

The law to fight discrimination based on sex and gender was modified in February 2020 to ensure that it now also covers the criteria of paternity, co-motherhood, breastfeeding, adoption, medically assisted reproduction and sex characteristics:

(http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2020/02/28_1.pdf#page=10).

Flemish Government

In line with the EU commission's demand, Flanders will extend the protection against retorsions when filing discrimination complaints in the Flemish decree for equal opportunities and non-discrimination. The changed Decree will be published at the latest by mid-2021.

Other legislative changes in line with the evaluation of the Flemish Decree will follow during 2021-2022.

3.3 Institutional changes**Flemish Government**

Creation of a central expert committee for the monitoring of discrimination. These experts will publish their first report in 2021 with recommendations for the Flemish government regarding the monitoring on the level of the Flemish governments and local authorities.

3.4 Research and awareness raising**Flemish Government**

During 2019 the Flemish decree on equal opportunities and non-discrimination (2008) and its implementation was evaluated. The research results (September 2020) show a severe lack of case law and point to some specific legislative changes to be made in order to fully align with EU directives and new policy lines (for example, regarding intersex people), but also for the better implementation of the decree. The implementation of these recommendations will give rise to several legislative changes in the coming years.

⁸ <https://www.plansacha.be/le-plan-sacha/>

3.5 Other pertinent developments

FWB

Soutien à l'association Fem&L.A.W pour l'écriture et le lancement en février 2020 du tout premier ouvrage « Droits des femmes. Code commenté ». Cet ouvrage qui est une première mondiale est un outil pratique qui défend et promeut les droits des femmes, pour permettre notamment aux avocat.es et aux magistrat.es d'être conscientisés dans leur façon d'interpréter parfois le droit. Le code est disponible en libre accès sur le site de l'asbl : <https://femandlaw.be/le-code-de-droit-des-femmes-disponible-en-libre-acces-sur-notre-site/>

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.5 Other pertinent developments

FWB

En 2019, La communauté française a financé une étude intitulée « Présence des femmes dans le champ des arts de la Scène ». Cette étude réalisée par l'Université de Liège et commanditée par Ecarlate la Cie vise à faire un état des lieux chiffrés de la participation des femmes dans le secteur des Arts de la Scène notamment dans les organes de décisions (Directions, Conseils d'administration et Instances d'avis). L'étude est consultable sur le site de la compagnie Ecarlate via le lien suivant : <https://acte3-4.deuxiemescene.be>.

Présentation, le 24 septembre 2020, du dernier rapport de SCIVIAS (projet de soutien à des musiciens et musiciennes et professionnel-le-s de la musique et réunissant plusieurs institutions/instances du secteur public en Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles). Cette plateforme a pour objectif d'agir pour une meilleure représentation des femmes dans le secteur et d'enrayer le sexisme systémique dont elles font l'objet, à travers un certain nombre d'engagements. <http://scivias.be/rapport>

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.5 Other pertinent developments

Flemish Government

Funded by the Flemish minister of Equal Opportunities, Ella vzw started a two-year project to inspire girls with ethnically diverse background to choose for STEAM-careers. The project called "The secret life of artists, engineers and scientists" focuses on the work and stories of role models in science and arts with a similar background, creates new video content and interviews and organises workshops around this theme. The project is running, despite the many restrictions related to the COVID-crisis, and will end May 2021.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

FWB

Fin 2019 élaboration du rapport sur l'intégration de la dimension de genre dans le budget 2019 de la Communauté française.

6.2 Policy changes

Flemish Government

In October 2020 the new horizontal equality and diversity action plan 2020-2024 was launched. The fight against discrimination, racism and sexism is a specific strategic objective. Crucial in the new action plan are the initiatives to be set up in co-operation with other policy domains, such as education, health, media, sports, employment, etc.

Policy options for the coming years are among others a research project about online sexism and the creation of an online civility code (in co-operation with the Media Department and sector); monitoring of the diversity within the corps of Flemish teachers; participation of men in HEED; active fatherhood; gender equality in media; etc.

FWB

L'ancien Groupe de coordination chargé de coordonner la politique de *gendermainstreaming* et de *genderbudgeting* de la Communauté française, institutionnalisé par le décret du 7 janvier 2016 relatif à l'intégration de la dimension de genre dans l'ensemble des politiques de la Communauté Française est modifié par le décret du 27 avril 2020 relatif à l'élaboration du plan Droits des Femmes 2020-2024. Il sera ainsi désigné un Comité de suivi chargé entre autres d'assurer l'intégration de la dimension de genre dans l'ensemble des politiques et budgets de la communauté française. Ce comité de suivi sera composé de : un représentant de chaque membre du Gouvernement de la Communauté française, huit représentants des services du Gouvernement, un représentant de chacun des organismes suivants: a) l'Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance; b) l'Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement supérieur. c) le Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, huit membres de la société civile expert.e.s en matières diverses relatives aux questions des genres, dont l'un.e au moins est issu.e du milieu académique.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Federal Government

- Two sensitisation videos were published by the Institute for the equality of women and men in April 2020: one on the notions of sex and gender (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBXg_9Zh4ps) and one on gender mainstreaming (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K6c6FKzSZ8>).
- In May 2020, the Institute for the equality of women and men published a note on the gender dimension of the COVID-19 crisis (https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/nota_over_de_genderdimensie_van_de_covid-19_crisis_fr.pdf).

FWB

Poursuite des formations en *gendermainstreaming* et *genderbudgeting* à destination des agent.es du Ministère, ainsi qu'une formation à la dimension de genre dans la communication à destination des communicant.es de la Communauté française.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

Flemish government

A new report (gender synthesis rapport) on indicators about equal participation of men and women in all spheres of life will be published by the end of 2020, written by VSA (The Flemish Authority on Statistics). This monitoring tool is based on the Gender Monitor that was published in 2016 and provides a baseline monitoring.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

In the context of the obligations to harmonise legislation with the *acquis communautaire*, arising from the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AGE BIH) of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MHRR BIH) in 2020 began activities on legal analysis and drafting of necessary amendments to the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the harmonisation of the Law with the Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast). Namely, the Directive requires not only that harassment and sexual harassment be prohibited by the national laws of the member states, but that member states ensure provisions that are effectively enforced in their specific legal and institutional circumstances and accompanied by proportionate and dissuasive sanctions. In addition, the Istanbul Convention also defines the content of the term sexual harassment. Finally, with regard to the labour market, it is necessary to consider the content of the International Labour Organization Convention No. 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work from 2019, which Bosnia and Herzegovina has not signed or ratified. Regarding the content of amendments to the Law, having in mind the practice of judicial bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is necessary to review the content of Article 29 of the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to determining the criminal offense of violence and harassment, in the manner how the elements of other criminal offenses are determined, and to consider the issue of the qualifying element.

1.2 Policy changes

In accordance with the competencies arising from the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the BIH Agency for Gender Equality/MHRR BIH, among other things, by issuing the recommendations, continuously influences policy changes in the direction of eliminating sexism and greater gender equality in public and private spheres.

Thus, in April 2020, the BIH Agency for Gender Equality /MHRR BIH sent to the competent authorities for co-ordination and management of the COVID-19 pandemic and competent ministries at all levels of government in BIH, the recommendations for gender mainstreaming in the process of planning, decision making and implementation plans to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In the recommendations, the agency pointed out the priority areas of social life in which it is necessary to be particularly sensitive to the specific impact that the crisis caused by the pandemic has on the position of women and girls, namely: prevention and protection from gender-based violence, women's employment in the pandemic, economic consequences pandemics in sectors that specifically employ women, as well as gender equality in decision-making bodies.

Having in mind the frequent violations of the principle of gender equality in the process of work and employment, contained in the practice where preference is given to one sex during employment, as well as violations of the rights of women, especially pregnant women, arising from labour legislation, in October 2019 the agency developed and published the recommendation to employers and competent authorities regarding gender equality in work and employment. The recommendation drew attention of employers in the private and public sectors, as well as the competent administrative bodies and the public of Bosnia and Herzegovina that disadvantaging workers based on their gender and gender specificity, such as pregnancy and motherhood, is an expression of direct discrimination based on gender is legally prohibited and punishable.

After the BIH Agency for Gender Equality/MHRR BIH drafted and the BIH Council of Ministers adopted the Guide for Prevention of Gender-Based Harassment and Sexual Harassment in the Institutions of

Bosnia and Herzegovina, in October 2019 the BIH Council of Ministers instructed all ministries and independent administrative organisations to, by the end of 2020, appoint counsellors for the prevention of gender-based harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as to make decisions on zero tolerance policy towards acts of sexual harassment and gender-based harassment, to inform employees, and information about the same to be published on the institution's website. As of October 2020, 29 institutions at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or about 50% of institutions, have adopted a zero-tolerance policy and appointed harassment prevention advisors. Professional training for the appointed advisors is underway within the regular training programme of the Civil Service Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

1.3 Institutional changes

The Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BIH, has started the process of consultations, within the Co-ordination Board for the Implementation of Gender Action Plan of BIH (GAP BIH), regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the UN CEDAW Committee on the 6th Periodic Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the UN CEDAW Committee. Among other things, Bosnia and Herzegovina was recommended to “establish a mechanism to monitor the use of sexist and misogynistic language and hate speech in public discourse and sexist portrayals of women in the media and to raise awareness among journalists and media experts about the importance of positive portrayals of women as active drivers of change.” Representatives of the Regulatory Agency for Communications (RAC) and other relevant members of the Co-ordination Board have been informed about the preparation and implementation of this important CEDAW Recommendation, and the need to involve other relevant actors has been recognised.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In order to mobilise the BIH public support for the implementation of CEDAW recommendations, the BIH Agency for Gender Equality issued a public statement in June 2020 in which, among other things, it draws the public's attention to Bosnia and Herzegovina's obligation to develop a comprehensive strategy to eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes responsibilities of women and men in the family and society, adapt appropriate legislation in line with the Council of Europe Recommendation on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexism and establish a mechanism to monitor the use of sexist and misogynistic language and hate speech in public discourse and sexist portrayals of women in the media. With the same goal of raising awareness on the need to prevent sexism in society, in March and April 2020, the agency promoted the adoption and content of the Council of Europe Recommendation on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexism through public announcements and appearances in the media.

Under the Financial Instrument for the Implementation of GAP BIH (FIGAP BIH), NGO projects have been funded to contribute to the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and the Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in BIH for the period 2018-2022. Of the selected projects, we highlight the Project “My RIGHT, not PRIVILEGE”, implemented by the Association of Roma Women “Better Future”, which launched an initiative by women's Roma and non-Roma organisations to introduce mechanisms for gender equality and greater participation of Roma women in the work of the bodies of interest for the Roma population. The awareness of the wider community, as well as the Roma population, was also raised about the importance of participation in public life and political and social engagement, as well as equal participation of women in the decision-making process. During the implementation of project activities, the state of disaster in the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina was declared, due to pandemic, so that certain funds were redirected to direct assistance to the Roma community in the situation of the COVID-19 epidemic.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

One of the pillars of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Fight against Terrorism (2015-2020) is the area of prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation. In terms of prevention, emphasis is placed on eliminating all causes that can lead to radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism, as well as on co-operation with the NGO sector, including religious communities, gaining support and

active involvement of the wider community, especially young people, in combating hate speech and hate crimes. Activities are aimed at promoting dialogue and tolerance. Preventive effects are achieved through co-operation with citizens, international organisations, civil society organisations, community policing, development of specific security programmes for vulnerable local communities, with special emphasis on increased participation of local religious leaders, and youth and women. In this regard, the Ministry of Security of BiH is continuously working to prevent all related phenomena that could lead to terrorism. Also, in partnership with the OSCE Mission to BiH, a campaign on reporting hate crimes was launched. The Ministry of Security of BiH is one of the key bodies and “allies” of the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/NHRR BiH in the implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Work Plan of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees for 2021 envisages, among other things, the implementation of the following activities:

1. Development of a Revised Action Plan for the Education of Journalists and Media Professionals in accordance with the UN guidelines of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.
2. Development of an Action Plan for the Prevention of Hate Speech in BiH.

The Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH is co-ordinating the process of development of the first ever Action Plan for the equality of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, supported by the Council of Europe. The Agency co-ordinates the work of the Working Group for drafting the Action Plan. Representatives of the administrative bodies from the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, BiH Entities and the Brcko District, as well as the representatives of the civil sector, participate in the work of the Working group. The action plan aims to provide strategic and co-ordinated work of relevant bodies on the realisation of goals: elimination of any direct or indirect discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, reduction of homophobia and transphobia in society, and improvement of quality of life of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The action plan includes, among other things, “Establishing effective mechanisms to protect against discrimination and hate crimes against LGBTI people” as one of the strategic goals.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

BiH was among the first Member-States of the Council of Europe to ratify the Istanbul Convention. Namely, the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina decided at its 38 regular session held on 7 August 2013 to ratify the aforementioned Convention. Having done so, BiH made a commitment to undertake legislative and other measures to secure legal, institutional and organisational frameworks for the prevention of violence against women, the protection of victims and for the sanctioning of the perpetrators of violence. The Law on Gender Equality in BiH prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender and sexual orientation in all spheres of life. In this context, different types of gender-based violence are considered forms of discrimination, i.e. a violation of human rights. Law on Gender Equality in BiH *lex specialis* which treats domestic violence as criminal act and prescribes a penalty for its commission. Article 29 of this Law provides that anyone who, on the basis gender, commits violence, harassment or sexual harassment endangering peace, mental health and physical integrity, will be sentenced to imprisonment from six months to five years.

Since the ratification, Bosnia and Herzegovina undertook the harmonisation of its legal framework in line with the standards outlined in the Convention. Due to the complex constitutional and administrative structure of the state, most of the relevant laws related to the Istanbul Convention are at the level of the entities Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska as well as Brčko District BiH. The Laws on protection from domestic violence were adopted in both entities as special pieces of legislation focused solely and comprehensively on the protection of victims of domestic violence. Federation BiH adopted the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in 2013. The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in the Republika Srpska was adopted in 2012 with the last

amendments introduced in 2019. Finally, the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted in 2018.

The Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in Republika Srpska from 2019 defines domestic violence as a criminal offense and not as a criminal offense or misdemeanour. This law also provides the victim with the necessary protection in the form of imposing urgent protection measures for the period of 30 days. The protective measures can be extended for an additional 30 days if needed. At the same time, the perpetrator has the option to learn non-violent forms of behaviour in crisis situations and to learn to control his aggressive urge or to be treated for certain addictive diseases. Also, the law introduces new rights for victims of domestic violence and further improves their protection. Furthermore, the subjects of protection in the process of protection, assistance and support to victims of domestic violence co-operate in the best interest of the victim are obliged to inform the victim, in an understandable way, about all rights the victim has in accordance with this and other regulations. The law stipulates that the protocols are to be concluded at the level of local self-government and the co-ordination body representing all institutions, bodies and organisations providing protection, assistance and support to victims of domestic violence is to be established. The additional amendment refers to the obligation of the police to immediately notify the competent prosecutor and, together with the report, submit all collected evidence and risk assessment. A significant novelty is that the victim can choose, before or during the proceedings, a person of trust, who will be present during the proceedings or actions related to protection from domestic violence. A trusted person can be any adult, except for the perpetrator of domestic or family violence. The initiative for the changes of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in Federation BiH has been also initiated in 2020.

2.2 Policy changes

The entity strategies for preventing and combating domestic violence have been developed based on the entity laws on protection from domestic violence. The Strategy for Prevention and Fight against Domestic Violence 2018-2020 is in force in the Federation of BiH. An Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy has been drafted and adopted, and in 2020 the drafting of the Strategy for the period 2020-2025 has begun. The drafting is co-ordinated by the Gender Centre of the Federation BiH and involves the Expert Team of the Government of the Federation BiH consisting of representatives of the relevant institutions at the level of Federation BiH and the NGO sector through the "NGO Safe Network". In the Republika Srpska, Article 4 of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence stipulates that, for the purpose of protection against domestic violence, the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska, at the proposal of the Government of Republika Srpska, adopts the Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic Violence in the Republika Srpska for a period of five years. In June 2020, the Government of the Republika Srpska adopted the Information on the Implementation of the Strategy for Prevention of Domestic Violence in the Republika Srpska 2014-2019.

2.3 Institutional changes

In line with the Istanbul Convention, Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH has initiated the establishment of a co-ordinating body at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely the Committee for Monitoring and Reporting under the Istanbul Convention and Femicide in BiH. At the proposal of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MHRR BiH), the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CoM BiH) adopted, in 2019, a Decision on the establishment of the Committee. First constituent meeting was held on 11 November 2019. The Committee held two meetings in 2020. One of the main conclusions of this body in 2020 has been to commence the establishment of the Femicide Watch for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2021.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In accordance with the calendar of monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, the competent body of the Council of Europe for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention - GREVIO Committee, on 6 September 2019, requested the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BiH to submit the Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina on Legislative

and Other Measures taken to implement the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. The Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH, in co-operation with the entity gender centres, co-ordinated the process of data collection and drafting the Report, based on the Questionnaire submitted by the Council of Europe. Entity gender centres (the Gender Centre of the Federation BiH and the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska) prepared entity reports with answers to the GREVIO Questionnaire, which were adopted by the entity governments. The mentioned entity reports were used for the preparation of the Consolidated BiH Report on Legislative and Other Measures for the Implementation of the Provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The report was submitted to GREVIO in March 2020 and published on the GREVIO website following the adoption of the report by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in June 2020. It has been planned that the representatives of the GREVIO Committee visit Bosnia and Herzegovina in September 2020, but due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the visit has been postponed until March 2021.

A Judiciary Analysis with a focus on collecting data on gender-based and domestic violence and femicide was presented to the stakeholders in 2019. The Analysis showed how the available data correspond to the data collection obligation required by the Istanbul Convention and other international standards. It has been noted that significant amount of data relevant to gender-based violence is not available. The analysis also includes proposed measures, as well as methodologies for comprehensive and accurate collection of data on the processing of cases of gender-based violence, violence against women and domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on the analysis, the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH made recommendations to the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HJPC BiH) with the aim of improving the existing systems of data collection within the judiciary. Specifically, it has been recommended that judicial IT system introduce identifiers with respect to the accused/defendant, victim, and witness to enable the following information to be obtained: the relationship/relationship of the accused/defendant and the victim (family relations, other relationships), to specify the list of relationships, the relationship/connection of the witness with the accused and/or the victim and specify the list of relationships, data on disability, information on whether social or health support was provided to the victims (to which party in the proceedings, at what duration, time of providing protection) and information on the duration of the proceedings. Through the joint work of the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH and the HJPC BiH the proposed changes were introduced in 2020 and the new system will be operational as of 1 January 2021.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH is implementing the project “Strengthening the Capacity of Institutions for Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The project significantly contributes to the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, as well as the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2018-2022. The main achievements in the reporting period were implementation of the Grant Programme for NGOs running Safe Houses for victims of gender-based violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (in amount of 80.000€), delivery of the IT equipment for the centres for social welfare in Federation BiH, establishment and work of the Committee for Monitoring and Reporting under the Istanbul Convention and Femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and initiation of the pilot project “Opening of the Crises Centres for Victims of Rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The Grant Programme for NGOs has been implemented as emergency assistance for the Safe Houses to ensure functioning of those organisations during pandemic of COVID-19.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The co-operation between the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of BiH (HJPC BiH), relevant civil society organisations and competent state institutions has continued. The support provided to the organisation “TRIAL International” in the process of drafting guidelines for resolving the property claim of the injured party in criminal proceedings is one of the examples of that co-operation.

3.2 Policy changes

The HJPC BiH has adopted a Strategy for the Promotion of Gender Equality in the BiH Judiciary, based on which all judicial institutions will adopt action plans and regularly report to the HJPC BiH on the progress made. In the forthcoming period, through the Project “Improving the Efficiency of Courts and Accountability of Judges and Prosecutors in BiH - Third Phase”, the HJPC BiH will undertake activities to implement the strategy.

Apart from the work with the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BiH on development of the system for data collection on gender-based violence, the HJPC conducted a survey of cases of gender-based violence intended for judges and prosecutors who work or have worked on cases of gender-based violence. The survey covered issues related to the qualification of criminal offenses in cases of gender-based violence, the imposition of protective measures, sentencing, assessment of mitigating and aggravating circumstances, the duration of the proceedings, resolving property claims, etc.

3.3 Institutional changes

The HJPC BiH analysed the implementation of the Guidelines for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment in Judicial Institutions for 2019, and undertook activities to organise initial and advanced training for appointed counsellors for the prevention of sexual and gender-based harassment (in judicial institutions) to be held in December 2020.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

A proposal for a training programme for 2021, which includes the appropriate gender training was submitted to the Entity Centres for the Training of Judges and Prosecutors (CTJP). The proposal is designed with the aim to further raise awareness of the importance of gender equality, and to improve the treatment and protection of women victims of violence. In addition, those judicial institutions called the judicial community to access the training, already provided for in the CTJP 2020 training programmes, in order to improve the level of knowledge, awareness and treatment in cases of gender-based violence.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

The HJPC is implementing Project “Improving the Efficiency of Courts and Accountability of Judges and Prosecutors in BiH - Third Phase”. The main objective of the Project is to improve the efficiency, quality, independence and transparency of the judiciary, which leads to the creation of a judicial system in the service of citizens. The activities planned in the third phase of the Project are focused on the sustainability of achieved results, but also on achieving new results, with the focus on improving efficiency of judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina and ensuring equal access to justice and equality of all citizens before the law.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

In the context of the obligation under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina to harmonise its legislation with the *acquis communautaire*, in 2020 the activities began on legal analysis and drafting of necessary amendments to the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including and the alignment with Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU, which further emphasises the prohibition of discrimination. In line with EU standards, putting women at a disadvantage with regard to pregnancy and motherhood constitutes direct discrimination on the grounds of gender. The analysis of Article 13 of the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicates that these forms of discrimination are largely covered by the existing text, in addition to the standards contained

in Directive 2019/1158 (which enters into force on 2 August 2022). In the further decision-making process on amendments to the law and it will be necessary to consider the extent to which the new standards of this directive will be included in the text of the law and which should be taken over by amendments to labour legislation and laws in the field of social protection. This refers, among other things, to the following rights: paternity leave, (non-transferable) parental leave, salary and salary compensation, flexible working conditions, etc.

Additionally, in the context of the implementation of the UN CEDAW recommendations on the 6th Periodical CEDAW Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Agency for Gender Equality BIH/MHRR BIH is collaborating with the BIH Central Election Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other relevant actors, such as academia, in order to design the most appropriate approach to accommodate the UN CEDAW recommendation on changes in legislation on elections, i.e. regarding 50% quota and the “zipper system”.

4.2 Policy changes

Regarding the participation of women in political decision-making and the election process, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BIH adjusts its activities according to the calendar of the election cycle, which is determined by the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, for example, in July 2020, before of the deadline for submitting electoral lists for participation in the 2020 Local Elections, the BIH Agency for Gender Equality/MHRR BIH sent to registered political parties an open letter titled “Nominate and promote women-candidates - it benefits everyone”, with the aim of greater representation of women-holders of candidate lists. The Agency for Gender Equality of BIH/MHRR BIH appealed to political parties to nominate and promote more women - holders of candidate lists and women - candidates for mayors. The agency drew attention to the need for political parties to take gender equality issues into account in their election programmes. The agency advocated that, among other things, each proposed programme and measure should be considered from the point of view that it is most likely to have a different effect on men and women, as well as other differences in society (people with disabilities, the elderly, the poor, LGBTI people and others).

Additionally, before the start of the local election campaign in October 2020, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BIH sent a public statement to all political entities and the public in which the agency draw attention to the principles of gender equality and refraining from stereotypes and sexism in the content of public appearances and materials during the election campaign. The BIH Agency for Gender Equality/MHRR BIH called on political entities and candidates, in their work, especially during the election campaign, not to base their public appearances and advertisements on gender-based prejudices and stereotypes based on gender, marital and family status and sexual orientations of others, and not to use sexism, i.e. insulting and belittling persons on the basis of gender.

4.3 Institutional changes

In July 2020, the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a Statement of Commitment for Gender Equality, drafted in co-operation with the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BIH, which expresses its determination to respect in all their activities and initiatives, within its competencies, the relevant international conventions and provisions of the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to advocate for gender equality issues and strive to make progress in the field of gender equality in all areas of public and political life.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

During 2020, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BIH conducted a “Survey on the Impact of Gender Division of Family and Household Work on the Professional Life of Employed Women in BIH”. Survey was conducted on a sample of 500 women who are employed and living with partners for at least one year. The findings showed that in as many as 93.8% of relationships all or most of the routine household chores are performed exclusively by women. In

most relationships (80.8%) it is the woman who does all or most of the work related to childcare. All this leaves negative consequences on the private and professional life of women, more precisely, it leaves them five times less time for rest, for personal and professional progress and training, participation in social activities or politics.

During 2020, the publication "Baseline Study on Barriers to Women's Political Participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina" was published, distributed and promoted to the public. The document was produced within the project "Women in Elections" implemented by UNDP, in partnership with the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH, entity gender centres, the Central Election Commission of BiH and the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH. The publication draws attention to contextual enablers of women's participation in political life, points to key challenges in political party politics and practice, provides important recommendations for promoting women's participation and provides a deeper analysis of the role of the media, with an emphasis on gender stereotypes.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

Within the mentioned project "Women in Elections", the brochure "Strategic approach to the success of women candidates in election campaigns" was realised and promoted, which is intended as a practical manual for women candidates and political parties. The brochure is based on the findings of the mentioned "Baseline Study", one of the conclusions of which is that in most political parties, as bearers of democratic processes, there is no structured approach in order to influence the obstacles faced by women in politics. This brochure responds precisely to this lack of support and offers, in a practical way, a modern approach to election campaigns. The advice contained in this brochure is based on international best practices, but is also tailored to the opportunities offered by the BiH electoral system. Therefore, the brochure offers an insight into the opportunities that candidates can use regarding the electoral system. In addition, the brochure offers advice to women candidates on how to approach an electorate that has its own prejudices and stereotypes about women in public and political life.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Nothing to report.

5.2 Policy changes

According to the Decision of the Council of Ministers of BiH from 2019, four (4) temporary reception centres (TRC) for migrants have been established (Sedra, Miral, Borići and Bira) on the territory of Una-Sana Canton in Federation of BiH. These centres, as well as TRC "Ušivak" in the Sarajevo Canton are being managed by the Service for Foreigners' Affairs of the BiH Ministry of Security. Being responsible for registration of the migrants, officers of the Service for Foreigners' Affairs are one of the first to come into the direct contact with vulnerable categories, they include other partners in a timely manner, in order to provide adequate protection to such persons. Together with partner organisations, international (IOM, UNHRC, DCR, Save the Children, World Vision) and domestic governmental and non-governmental organisations, they take all measures to protect vulnerable categories, especially migrant at-risk groups. There is still a great need for systemic protection of children and women, especially in access to education and health care. There are recorded cases of violence against migrant women, especially girls, as well as trafficking in women for the purpose of prostitution.

5.3 Institutional changes

International organisations, in partnership with NGOs and relevant institutions, provide a variety of support, including humanitarian assistance in food, clothing, equipment and hygiene products, as well as legal assistance, psychological support, medical or basic health care, transportation and accommodation.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Various needs assessments of families with children, women and girls, were made in relation to gender-based violence in the context of mixed migration in BiH. The non-governmental organisation “Women from Una” (Bihać) has implemented a programme of recovery from the trauma of refugee women and migrants.

The Foundation “BiH Women's Initiative” (BHWI) provides psychosocial support to vulnerable groups of women on the move (women traveling with members or alleged family members, single mothers and fathers, unaccompanied girls, the sick, those who cannot write and read, or do not know the Latin alphabet, and illiterate girls). The psychosocial mobile team consists of social workers, psychologists, translators, cultural mediators for 11 languages, assisting in temporary reception centres for migrants in BiH. Accommodation in the centres does not fully meet the requirements and they do not comply with mandatory international and domestic guidelines. The BHWI staff performs tasks of translation, recording, filling out forms, literacy, additional training, health care, occupational therapy, workshops (hairdressing, tailoring, sewing, knitting, make-up, jewellery making), sports and cultural activities, music and dance, preservation of mental health, psychological support, work with people who are victims of some form of violence and more.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

In 2020, as part of the global campaign “16 days of activism against gender-based violence”, the BHWI Foundation in one of TRC (Salakovac, Mostar) held workshops, and slogans have been used with clear messages of solidarity with women victims of sexual and gender-based violence. Messages were written in Kurdish, Arabic, Urdu and Farsi language, on scarves and gloves, sending a symbolic message - Stop violence against women and girls!

In the circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergence of deviant behaviour, which often includes violence within isolated migrants’ communities, requires a joint struggle through various forms of activities that can enable the prevention and transparent protection of women migrants and their human rights. In the current conditions it is a great challenge and risk to hold workshops and assistance to women migrants in TR centres, following all epidemiological measures that are recommended. It was proved that in this challenging time, education is extremely important for both children and parents. It is especially important to put emphases to education of women, so that they are not exploited by men, who often present themselves as their companion, while they are not in any kind of relationship.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

The Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BiH has initiated activities on drafting the Law on Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of harmonizing this law with the directives of the European Union, adopted after 2009 - when the last amendments were made. The aim of the amendments is to improve the principles of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in the area of work and employment, but also in other areas regulated by EU directives (please refer to item 1.1).

In order to improve implementation of gender responsive budgeting, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MFT BiH) has issued instructions in the Law on the Budget of BiH Institutions and International Obligations of BiH for 2020. It is stated that all budget users who plan grant support to end beneficiaries have to include gender aspect in the allocation of grants, as well as in reporting on the use of funds. Furthermore, instruction for the preparation of the Budget for 2021 (Instruction No. 2), states that each budget programme, where applicable, has to include gender equality aspect and explain it in the rationale. It should be also reflected in the BPMIS - Information System for Budget Planning and Management, in entering funds by economic categories of expenditures, and for performance measures within the justification of the programme (including

data on the number of employees disaggregated by gender and jobs and status (appointed and elected persons, senior civil servants, civil servants and employees).

The Ministry of Defence of BiH (MoD BiH) has conducted gender analyses of the legal regulations and bylaws in the defence sector. It was considered whether, in what way and to what extent, positively or negatively, a certain regulation affects the rights, position and quality of life of women and men. Out of a total of 327 identified existing legal regulations and bylaws in the MoD BiH and Armed Forces (AF BiH) gender analyses and concrete measures for harmonisation with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH have been proposed for 15% of the regulations.

6.2 Policy changes

Co-ordination boards for monitoring implementation of Gender Action Plan in BiH have been established at the level of institutions in BiH, and at the entity level. The BiH Agency for Gender Equality/MHRR BiH and entity gender centres (Gender centre of Federation BiH and Gender centre of Republika Srpska) regularly provide technical and expert support to institutions represented in co-ordination boards in the process of gender mainstreaming of the programmes, policies and strategies in specific areas of social life.

Recent positive example in the area of security is introduction of gender equality standards in the Strategy and Action Plan for Integrated Border Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2019-2023. The Strategy was proposed by the Ministry of Security BiH and adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH at the beginning of January 2020.

The BiH Ministry of Defence has adopted a Gender Equality Policy in the MoD and AF BiH. An analysis of the AF BiH from a gender perspective was conducted, including a review of internal policies, procedures and work culture, and military training and operations, with an emphasis on qualitative data. This analysis contains an overview of the current situation and relevant data in the past five years (since 2015) and defines specific recommendations and proposals for improving the situation of gender equality in the MoD and AF BiH.

6.3 Institutional changes

In October 2019, the Council of Ministers of BiH (CoM BiH) adopted the Guidelines for effective measures for the prevention and protection against gender-based harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace in BiH institutions. It is an additional measure to improve implementation of Law on Gender Equality in the labour and labour relations. The CoM BiH requested state institutions to adopt a decision on a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment and gender-based harassment by the end of 2020, as well as to appoint counsellors for prevention of gender-based harassment and sexual harassment at the workplace. To date, more than 30 institutions have realised this requirement. Training for the counsellors is planned by the end of the 2020 (please refer to item 1.2, last paragraph).

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Gender training for civil servants in BiH (including both entities: RS and FBiH) are regularly conducted as part of the training programmes of the state and entity civil service agencies. In the reporting period, this training was held through online platforms.

As part of public administration reform, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina/MHRR BiH conducted a pilot of Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) in BiH public administration institutions, as well as domestic and international civil society organisations. The methodology of this survey was aligned with EU standards for CSS in public administration institutions. By this, and dedicated to transparent work and continuous improvement of its work, the agency has become one of the first institutions in BiH that in this way strengthens the dialogue with citizens, the non-governmental sector and representatives of BiH institutions. The intention of the agency is to conduct this survey every year.

The BH Agency for Gender Equality/MHRR BIH conducted a research “The impact of the gender division of family and household duties on the professional life of employed women in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” This one of the priority issues in the Gender Action Plan of BIH, as well as in the process of integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the EU, through the application of EU standards of gender equality. The results of the research have shown that there is still a marked gender inequality in Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of household duties and care for children, which leaves negative consequences on the private and professional life of women. That is why this is perceived as a structural issue, which requires engagement in the adoption of policies and laws, in order to enable gender equality and economic independence of women, because they bear the burden of unpaid work to the greatest extent (please refer to item 4.4) .

6.5 Other pertinent developments

In reporting period several guidelines and checklist have been developed, as follows:

- Guidelines for Gender Responsible Parliamentary Action in the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina (PA BIH) were developed with the aim to provide members of the Commission for Gender Equality of the House of Representatives of the PA BIH with practical advice and checklist for gender mainstreaming in legislation and parliamentary oversight and control over the adopting and executing the budget.
- The Self-Assessment Tool was developed with the aim of strengthening the capacity of members of the Commission for Gender Equality of the House of Representatives of the PA BIH. This document is a framework for action that can also serve as an initial step in assessing gender sensitivity of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore to improve implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina and international standards for gender equality.

Both above mentioned documents have been developed with support of UNDP project “Women in elections”

- In co-operation with the NGO “Foundation of Local Democracy”, which represents Human Rights Defenders in BIH (HRD), Guidelines for the management of cases of violations of human rights of HRD are being drafted. The aim of the Guidelines is to improve the institutional response to gender-based discrimination, bearing in mind that the targeted institutions are responsible for receiving individual complaints, investigating and issuing recommendations as well as monitoring their continuous implementation in order to more effective processing of cases of human rights violations and gender-based discrimination. The Guidelines propose possible legal protection mechanisms that can be used in the case that human rights defenders are in urgent need for protection from attacks and threats that they face in implementation of their activities.
- In accordance with the Action Plan for the Implementation of Priorities from the Analytical Report of the European Commission, adopted by the Directorate for European Integration (Chapter 19: “Social Policy and Employment”) Bosnia and Herzegovina was committed to introduce a harmonised minimum level of maternity leave benefits and protection throughout the country by the end of 2020, including harmonisation of definitions of leave for mothers, fathers and parents. As an instrument for achieving this goal, the Framework Guidelines for the Protection of Maternal Human Rights and the Development of Parenthood in BIH were developed. This document analyses and presents the current situation in this area, emphasising all the limitations, but also the possibilities for development of new or improving existing policies for protection of mothers through legal acts at all levels in BIH (in co-operation with relevant bodies and in accordance with constitutional competencies in BIH).

- The Ministry of Defence of BiH has adopted a methodology and matrix (checklist) for the analysis of laws and regulations to be used for its harmonisation with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination and other relevant gender equality standards.
- The Project EU Gender Equality Facility (GEF) in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been launched in the reporting period. This is an instrument for strengthening the effective implementation of domestic and international legal frameworks concerning gender equality and women's rights, mainstreaming gender into EU integration and planning processes for pre-accession assistance and strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender equality in line with the EU standards. Furthermore, GEF will support institutions in correctly aligning with the EU Gender Equality acquis.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The very complex administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the many layers of governments, constantly unstable political situation with strong division of constitutional responsibilities, often have an impact and presents challenges to gender mainstreaming processes in BiH. Constitution of government was significantly delayed after the general elections in 2018. The Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina was completed only in May 2020, when the last minister - Minister of Humana Rights and Refugees of BiH was appointed.

The COVID-19 pandemic-induced emergency in the country poses a significant challenge to the socio-economic situation and presents new demands on institutions and the non-governmental sector. Mitigating the impact of the pandemic requires institutions to harness all existing and adopt new skills to assess the situation and needs, as well as to develop measures and policies with a tailored impact, and to closely monitor the implementation and actively adapt to the needs of the population.

However, organisation of the work of the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH, in the emergency and crisis situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, proved to be very effective. This demonstrate the existence of responsibility and commitment of all the agency's employees to achieve maximum results in implementation of regular and outstanding activities during the changed and specific working conditions, working "from home" and using various communication and information technologies. The key to the productivity of the agency was the immediate establishment of a clear communication network, with several lines of continuous communication between team members, and with the agency's partners.

From the very beginning of the pandemic the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH/MHRR BiH drew the attention of professional and wider public to the possible increase of violence again women and family violence. The agency provided financial support to NGOs running safe houses and co-ordinated other donor support related to consequences of the pandemic and managed to secure some regular fund to NGOs within the regular budget of BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees. Furthermore, gender institutional mechanisms issued relevant proposals for the gender responsive approach in the government measures for COVID-19 response and recovery, for example the Agency for Gender Equality issued "Recommendations for the gender mainstreaming of planning and implementation of COVID-19 recovery measures".

BULGARIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Equality between men and women in the Republic of Bulgaria is guaranteed at the highest legislative level. Pursuant to Article 6 of the Constitution, all citizens shall be equal before the law and there shall be no privileges or restriction of rights on the grounds of race, national or social origin, ethnic self-identity, sex, religion, education, opinion, political affiliation, personal or social status or property status. (<https://www.parliament.bg/en/const>).

The Law on Protection against Discrimination (LPD) protects from discrimination all physical entities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, without differentiating between various protected grounds as race, ethnicity, sex, disability, nationality, personal or social status, sexual orientation and every other trait stated in a law or international contract in which the Republic of Bulgaria takes part (Article 4, paragraph 1 from the LPD). Harassment based on the aforementioned grounds, sexual harassment, discrimination incitement, persecution and racial segregation, as well as construction and maintenance of an architectural environment impeding the access of disabled people to public places are also considered discrimination (Article 5 from LPD). (<https://www.mlsp.government.bg/blgarsko-zakonodatelstvo>)

The Act on Equality between Women and Men regulates the drafting of a National Strategy for the Equality between Women and Men, which is the main programming document and is implemented through plans. **The National Strategy for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men 2016-2020**, adopted by Council of Ministers Decision No. 967 of 14 November 2016, contains the following main priority areas:

- Increasing female labour market participation and an equal economic independence of women and men;
- Reducing the gender pay and earnings gap;
- Promoting equality between women and men in decision-making processes;
- Combating gender-based violence and protection and support of victims;
- Changing the existing gender-based stereotypes in different areas of social life.

During the reporting period a draft of National Strategy for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men 2021-2030 was been elaborated by interinstitutional working group. Priority areas of the draft Strategy are equality between woman and men on labour market and equal economic independence; reducing gender pay and earnings gap; promoting equality between women and men in decision-making processes; combating violence and protection and support of victims; and overcoming stereotypes based on sex in different areas of public life and sexism.

During the reporting period is under implementation a National Action Plan for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men for 2019-2020, adopted by the Council of Ministers by Decision No. 14 of 17 January 2019. It contains measures from the competences of different institutions and organisations in the priority areas of the Strategy, responsible bodies, financial resources and performance indicators. For example, the measures put in place to prevent and combat gender-based stereotypes and sexism in the media are aimed at conducting focused monitoring of broadcast commercial messages in programmes of media service providers, with regard to gender stereotypes presence, as well as on media service providers' programmes for the presence of elements that incite gender-based hatred; periodic follow-up with subsequent analysis of trends in the creation of the gender-profiled programmes by broadcasters that inspire one-sided behavioural, social, content and visual models regarding equality between women and men; monitoring of women's participation in the 2019 election races for the European Parliament and local authorities.

Other measures within the competence of the defence, home affairs and security sectors, such as conducting an information policy for equal and dignified representation of women and men in the military forces, national holidays, official celebrations, ceremonies, military rituals, and good examples of merit and military, Christian and human virtues. Another example is the Shooting Tournament for female officers in the defence, homeland security and security sectors, held on the eve of International Women's Day on 8 March 2019. The aim is to increase the authority of the institutions concerned and to encourage more young girls and women to take up employment in those sectors that are stereotypically considered as males-one. The awards of the honourees were presented at a special celebration. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has set up measures to promote the national policy on equality between women and men in national and international events and to increase the capacity of the co-ordinators on equality between women and men. Other measures are related to the professional development of pedagogical specialists related to the vocational guidance of students; and others.

The implementation of the National Strategy and its plans are reported in annual Reports on Equality between Women and Men. During the reporting period, a Report on Equality between Women and Men in Bulgaria for 2019 was been developed. (<https://www.mlsp.government.bg/blgarsko-zakonodatelstvo>).

In 2019, a seminar for civil society organisations for counteracting and registering hate crimes was held in Sofia. The seminar was organised by the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The seminar was attended by Assoc. Prof. Ana Dzhumalieva, PhD, Chair of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination. In her speech, she emphasised the role of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) as a contact point for the Republic of Bulgaria with the Organisation for Security and co-operation in Europe on Hate Crimes. In conclusion, she stressed that the CPD has the will and readiness to participate in the processes of co-operation and joint efforts to combat hate crimes.

1.2 Policy changes

The provisions of the Act on Equality between Women and Men (AEWM) regulate the operational institutional mechanism for equality between women and men, an important and key element of which are the co-ordinators of equality between women and men (together with the National Council on Equality between Women and Men at the Council of Ministers). According to Article 8 of the AEWM, the central and territorial bodies of the executive authorities designate employees who perform the functions of co-ordinators for equality between women and men, namely:

- participate in the development and implementation of the national equality policy for women and men;
- participate in the development of sectoral and local policies and programmes in view of equality between women and men;
- participate in the preparation of gender (by gender we mean sex) impact assessments of regulations and strategic documents proposed by the executive bodies;
- participate in the preparation, implementation and reporting of the National Strategy and plans for its implementation by their competence;
- co-ordinate the implementation of measures within the competence of the executive body and participate in the preparation of reports on equality between women and men;
- participate in the development of quantitative and qualitative indicators and analyses of equality between women and men in the respective area of competence of the institution;
- co-ordinate the collection and dissemination of information and good practices, the provision of equality between women and men data within the competence of the executive body;
- participate in training on equality between women and men, as well as in the organisation of such training;
- perform other functions in the field of equality between women and men, assigned by the respective executive body.

The designated co-ordinators co-operate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, as their functional responsibilities are defined in their job descriptions or by order issued by the hiring state authority. To date, there are 85 persons designated by the central executive bodies and all 28 regional administrations as co-ordinators for equality between women and men.

One of the priorities of the National Strategy for Promoting Equality between Women and Men 2016-2020 is to increase female labour market participation and equal economic independence of women and men. The National Action Plan to Promote Equality between Women and Men for 2019-2020 includes measures under this priority to promote women's participation in the labour market and to better reconcile personal and professional life, to prepare for the development of Strategy for the Promotion of Women Entrepreneurship in Bulgaria, promoting the participation of women entrepreneurs with innovative ideas under the Horizon 2020 Programme, and in particular the SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) Instrument, providing equal access to training and counselling services of beneficiaries in the field of agriculture, promotion of talented children of both sexes in the fields of arts, science and sports through the Programme of measures for the protection of children with outstanding gifts from public, municipal and private schools, activities for promotion of qualification of pedagogical specialists related to the vocational guidance of students, etc. (<https://www.mlsp.government.bg/blgarsko-zakonodatelstvo>)

On the labour market, according to Eurostat data for the second quarter of 2020 in Bulgaria, 46.7% of the employed, incl. 41.7% of managers are women (45.9% and 33.7% for the EU-27 respectively). For 2019, Eurostat reports an 8.6% gender employment gap for Bulgaria (compared to 11.7% for the EU-27). According to Eurostat data, the gender pay gap in Bulgaria for three consecutive years was decreased from 14.6% in 2016, to 14.3% in 2017 down to 13.9% in 2018, compared to 14,1% for the EU-27 in 2018.

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination organises training seminars under the Project “Anti-Discrimination on the Labour Market” under Contract No. BG05M9OP001-3.017-0001-C01 under the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development. After the training, the participants acquired the necessary competencies to improve the application of the principle of equality in the field of labour and employment in both the public and private sectors, in particular with regard to the prevention of different treatment in the field of employment and working conditions in connection with other employees due to their ethnicity, which the CPD certifies with a certificate.

After selecting employers, the CPD currently organises a procedure for participation in the “Employer without discrimination”. For this purpose, a number of conditions should be met, including:

1. to approve Internal rules for protection in the exercise of the right to work and to ensure equal opportunities on the labour market, with which they are familiar during the training and provided in the training package.
2. to appoint a person to monitor the implementation of the policy on non-discrimination in the workplace.

Having employees with the employer concerned, whether from the private or public sector will help to prevent and prevent discrimination in the workplace.

1.3 Institutional changes

An independent specialised state body has been established in the Republic of Bulgaria, with significant powers of prevention, protection against discrimination and promotion of equal treatment - the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD). It operates under the specialised Law on Protection against Discrimination (LPD), which aims to ensure to every person the right to equality before the law, equality of treatment and opportunities for participation in public life and effective protection against discrimination. According to the Law on Protection against Discrimination, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination is an independent specialised state body for the

prevention of discrimination, protection against discrimination and ensuring equality of opportunity. The Commission monitors the implementation and compliance with the LPD or other laws governing equality of treatment.

The Law on Protection against Discrimination and the established and operating in accordance with its provisions Commission for Protection against Discrimination are an essential part of the anti-discrimination policy of the Republic of Bulgaria, which includes equality between women and men.

It is noteworthy that the Law on Protection against Discrimination provides provisions for protection against discrimination, including on the grounds of sex in various spheres of public life: Chapter 2 'Protection against discrimination' - Section I 'Protection in the exercise of the right to work', Section II 'Protection in the exercise of the right of education and training' and Section III 'Protection in the exercise of other rights'. The provisions of Section I "Protection in the exercise of the right to work" have a broad scope - job vacancies, criteria for admission and appointment when applying for a position, job application, selection of candidates, non-discriminatory and equal working conditions, equal remuneration for equal work and work of equal value, equal criteria in imposing disciplinary sanctions, termination of employment, exercising social security rights, vocational training of employees, collective labour law.

The CPD has regional representatives, which makes it unique in Europe. They have an obligation to provide independent legal assistance to citizens, to advise them and to inform them about the application of the LPD, about the powers and rules of procedure before the Commission, on the possibilities of protecting the infringed right of equal treatment, incl. for their procedural powers in the proceedings before the CPD.

In fulfilment of the obligation to provide independent legal assistance to victims of discrimination when filing complaints of discrimination (Article 47, item 9 of the Law on Protection against Discrimination), citizens are consulted at the reception of the CPD and by telephone.

The provisions of the Act on Equality between Women and Men (AEWM) are regulated by the National Council on Equality between Women and Men (NCEWM) at the Council of Ministers. The NCEWM is a co-ordinating and consultative body that supports the Council of Ministers in the development and implementation of the state policy on equality between women and men. It is also a body for consultation, co-operation and co-ordination between central and territorial executive bodies and civil society structures. The National Council comprises from deputy ministers of all ministries, representatives of relevant agencies and bodies, organisations of employers and employees at the national level, the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria, non-governmental organisations, etc. The National Council on Equality between Women and Men:

- provides opinions on draft strategic documents and regulations containing provisions related to the equality of women and men before they are put forward to the Council of Ministers;
- participates in the development of the National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men;
- proposes measures to promote the state policy for equality between women and men;
- participates in the development of the quantitative and qualitative indicators required for the equality between women and men monitoring system.

During the reporting period, the NCEWM approved the Report on Equality between Women and Men in Bulgaria for 2019, before its submission for adoption by the Council of Ministers, and the draft of National Strategy for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men 2021-2030. Information on the activities of the NCEWM can be found at http://saveti.government.bg/web/cc_19/1.

Complaints and signals to Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) are submitted to the head office and the regional offices, and it should be noted that the proceedings are free of charge. Independent assistance is also provided in the preparation of the initiative document.

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination participates in all forums related to the protection of human rights. We regularly receive and respond to invitations from non-governmental organisations working on the above issues. This close synergy facilitates the implementation of prevention policies in order to prevent discrimination on any grounds.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The actual National Action Plan to Promote Equality between Women and Men for 2019-2020 includes measures for organising and conducting a shooting tournament “8 March” female-officers of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defence and security services, conducting of information policy for representation of women and men in the Armed Forces during national holidays, official celebrations, ceremonies, military rituals, as well as good examples for merits and demonstrated military, Christian and human virtues, etc.

The Badge of Distinction awarded for significant achievements in the effective implementation of the equality between man and woman policy, established in accordance with the provisions of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, is encouraging and represents a moral reward and an incentive for institutions/organisations in order to improve their management, in line with the achievement of equality for women and men. In 2020, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for the awarding of the Badge of Distinction awarded elected organisations and institutions, in the following three categories: state institutions (central and local authorities), commercial and non-commercial organisations and public organisations and institutions.

Currently the National Statistical Institute is working on the project BGLD-3.001-0001 “Novel Approaches to Generating Data on hard-to-reach populations at risk of violation of their rights”, funded by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area 2014 - 2021 (EEA FM). The project is implemented in partnership with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and its goal is to develop innovative methods and approaches for data collection and adaptation of relevant indicators needed to formulate and implement policies aimed at representatives of vulnerable groups of the population. In 2020, a field survey was conducted among households with specialised questionnaire including different topics, as well as modules on maternity health, well-being, discrimination, harassment and violence. Although the survey is focused on the overall population, not specifically on stereotypes by sex, there will be available data on some important indicators, related to women from vulnerable groups particularly for Roma, elderly, with disabilities and children. In 2021, NSI together with FRA will prepare several reports on the situation of vulnerable groups in Bulgaria. The main purpose of the report will be to inform the public and state institutions about regional development and the distribution of funding to reduce vulnerability in relevant areas and overcome national disparities.

Most of the regional representatives of the CPD are permanent members of the Regional Councils for co-operation on Ethnic and Integration Issues. They actively participate in the development and implementation of the Regional Strategies for Roma Integration. Open receptions are held in Roma neighbourhoods. Employees of the Regional Representatives Directorate actively participate in international and national seminars, round tables and thematic meetings for Roma integration. The emphasis in conducting these events is focused on the development, based on shared good practices, of criteria and standards for educational and vocational training of representatives of vulnerable groups. In this way, the aim is to facilitate social inclusion and increase the employment of ethnic minorities. Regional representatives organise or actively participate in events and campaigns related to World School Violence Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, International Roma Day, International Homophobia Day, International Day of Older Persons, International Day of the Elderly for Combating Violence against Women, International White Cane Day, International Day for Tolerance, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, International Human Rights Day. Presentations, round tables, essay, drawing competitions, etc. are organised with the respective thematic focus.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Successful action against prevalent and persistent sexist beliefs and manifestations relies on the implementation of specific measures to strengthen equality between women and men in different areas of public life. A culture that, through its instruments, helps to shape new convictions and values, plays an essential role in changing the mindset in favour of equality between women and men and in overcoming stereotypes based on sex. In this regard, activities are planned to promote the integration of the principle of equality between women and men - for example, annual support of children with prominent gifts from state and municipal schools - girls and boys, according to their specific needs and talents, capacity and perspectives for development. The promotion of talented children and young people of both sexes for creative development in the sector of arts and amateur arts has a similar impact. The equal participation of women and men in creative projects and events in different spheres of culture is a factor that also helps the successful opposition of stereotypes based by sex in contemporary society. Another key measure to make progress in this priority area is the financing of specific training, activities and projects targeting women and other vulnerable groups at risk of discrimination. It is considered necessary, on a wider scale, to specify and undertake specific activities for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the principle of equality between woman and man and the prevention of discrimination when planning, with adequate European funding, the operational programmes of the new programme period 2021-2027.

As early as 2018, the CPD observed an escalation of hate speech and issued a declaration entitled "Declaration of Reconciliation". The Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) expressed with concern its position for escalation of hate speech and discriminatory attitude due to the expressed opinion and stated value position. As the OSCE's national focal point for hate crimes, the CPD calls on the public, institutions, parties and organisations to adhere to high human rights standards for civilised democratic discussion and public criticism. This finding of the CPD stemmed from a number of recent examples in which public speaking and action, incl. and on social networks, escalates to unacceptable extremes, discriminatory behaviour and hate speech, which can limit the participation of citizens in democratic debate in society. At the same time, the CPD considers complaints and signals related to hate speech on various grounds, highlighting ethnicity, social status, and sex.

In the collective agreements of companies and state-owned enterprises in which the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications is the majority owner, a separate Section "Equality between women and men and protection from violence in the workplace" is established, according to which the employer:

- ensures the implementation of the principle of equality between women and men in terms of paid labour, access to training and career development;
- takes effective measures to prevent physical and psychical harassment in the workplace;
- pursues a policy of zero tolerance towards violence in the workplace in its different aspects - physical, psychical and sexual;
- takes actions to raise the awareness of managers, employees and workers through training to identify signs of harassment and violence at the workplace, and initiate preventive actions to support victims;
- in the event of harassment or violence, takes appropriate disciplinary measures by conducting an internal investigation, impartial hearing of the parties, providing support to the victim(s) and, if necessary, providing psychological assistance in their reintegration.

The ethical codes of employees and workers, including the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, establish moral-ethical norms, principles and standards of conduct for workers. In the performance of the work by the staff, there is not allowed direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of nationality, origin, sex, sexual orientation, race, skin colour, age, political and religious beliefs, membership of trade unions and other public organisations and movements,

family and material status, presence of physical disabilities, as well as differences in the duration of the contract and the length of work hours.

In this regard is also the commitment of the management to provide all employees with equal opportunity for professional realisation, expression and development and for objective and correct evaluation of the results achieved.

The policy of the Ministry of Education and Science regarding prevention and combat negative stereotypes by sex and sexism is reflected to the greatest extent in the provisions of Ordinance No. 13 on civil, health, environmental and intercultural education. In it, the problems of stereotypes and sexism are addressed through prisms of different types of education, thus forming a more comprehensive vision for solving them. In this regard, the teachers' hour class is held which is dedicated to equality of women and men, as well as to overcoming negative stereotypes

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The powers of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination are set out in Article 47 of the PADA. According to the texts of the provisions, the CPD has no legislative initiative. The commission takes advantage of the norm of Article 47 item 8 gives opinions on draft normative acts for their compliance with the legislation for prevention of discrimination, as well as recommendations for adoption, repeal, amendment and supplementation of normative acts. In this regard, the Commission expressed an opinion on the Istanbul Convention by the CPD at the request of the 44th National Assembly, noted in item 2.

In 2019, amendments to the Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Act (CTHBA) and the Rules of Organisation and Activity of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB) were adopted. NCCTHB administration (NCCTHBA) worked actively to achieve this result, and the activity was enshrined in several consecutive annual National Programmes. In October 2019 the National Assembly finally adopted the amendments at a second reading. The amendments, prepared by NCCTHBA, have been submitted by the Council of Ministers. The proposed amendments and supplements to the CTHBA are dictated by the need to comply with the international legal instruments to which Bulgaria is a part, as well as by the need to remove contradictions in provisions that the practice has proved inapplicable.

The amendments to the CTHBA aim to improve the means and mechanisms of the NCCTHB for management and control of the structures under the CTHBA, as well as to upgrade the organisation and co-ordination between the various departments and organisations related to functions under the law. Key aspects concerning the adopted amendments include:

- introducing a clear definition in the law of a period of unconditional support for victims of trafficking in human beings with clear regulation of its functions and term (so-called "recovery and reflection period"), in line with GRETA's recommendations and the Council of Europe Convention, as well as Directive 2011/36/EU;
- the role of the NCCTHB as a national co-ordinator for the implementation of the National Mechanism for Referral and Support of Trafficked Persons and as a national reporting body is confirmed;
- the possibility to open specialised shelters for subsequent reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings by initiative of the NCCTHB is supplemented.

2.2 Policy changes

Actual **National Action Plan for Promotion of Equality between Women and Men for 2019-2020** includes measures from the competences of different institutions aimed to combat violence, based on sex, and to support victims, such as : improving the legal framework in the field of violence against women and domestic violence (in order to ensure adequate and comprehensive protection against

all acts of violence against women, including mental and physical abuse and improving national legislation with a view to preventing and combating domestic violence); carrying out activities aimed at raising the professional qualification and expertise of specialists working on cases of domestic violence and violence, based on sex; conducting awareness-raising activities for various vulnerable groups and society on the whole; providing social services to children and persons victims of violence, trafficking or other forms of exploitation (Crisis centres, shelters and other services); maintaining telephone lines to register signals of discrimination and violence (Ministry of Defence); timely support for children, victims or at risk of violence through the implementation of the co-ordinating mechanism for interaction on working on cases of children, victims or at risk of violence and for interaction in crisis intervention, early identification of a specific vulnerability, needs assessment and provision of timely care and services, execution and participation in projects for the prevention and combating of violence, implementation of the co-operation framework, procedures and measures set out in the National mechanism for directing and assisting victims of trafficking in human beings - women and men, girls and boys, implementation of targeted prevention activities with focus on young people and students, etc.

2.3 Institutional changes

Over the years, the CPD has developed a practice based on which to implement instruments for non-admission of any forms of discrimination.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

During the reporting period, continue the implementation by Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of project BG05M9OR001-3.011 "Together Against Violence" under the Operational Programme "Human Resources Development" 2014-2020. The project will be completed on 31 December 2020. The implementation of the project aims at providing the necessary general and specific measures by the state in relation to victims of violence at all territory of the country. The elaborated under project materials supported conducting during reporting period of 10 training sessions in the country with 330 participants, by which was increased capacity of specialist working on cases of violence, which help prevention, adequate support for victims and their successful re-socialisation. In order to provide data on violence in Bulgaria, under the project envisages was conducted a national representative survey. Adult citizens were polled and interviews were conducted with experts working on cases of violence in the social area, health care, education, police, justice, etc., employers and victims of violence. During the survey focus was placed on the violence experienced in different environments, such as family environment, workplace and others, as well as various forms of violence. During reporting period under project also Information materials was developed and disseminated, and was held 2 national conferences and 6 campaigns to raise awareness and sensitivity of citizens about the various forms of violence across the country, as well as provoking the general public and institutions to recognise the violence as human rights violations, to speak about it and unite their efforts in limiting violence. In the project also work was done on developing a concept for a system for monitoring the equal treatment of women and men, which to support the collection, recording and processing of data across sectorial policies.

In September 2020, the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute started work on the Project 'Survey on Gender-Based Violence (full implementation)' according to the Grant agreement with the European Commission.

In the frame of the project, a survey on the gender-based violence in the country will be conducted in strict compliance with the requirements of national legislation and methodological recommendations of the EC. The focus is on the prevalence of violence among women aged 18 - 74. The purpose of the survey is to collect reliable, comparable and representative at national and European level data on the spread of the phenomenon. The fieldwork will be conducted in the period September 2021 – January 2022. Data will be available in 2023.

The implementation of the project is an important step towards the introduction of this type of statistical surveys in the regular statistical practice of the country in the future.

According to its functions under the Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Act (CTHBA), the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings collects and analyses data related to the crime of trafficking in human beings and victims of the crime. In addition, the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings has the role of national rapporteur. These analyses, including on crime trends, victim profiles, recruitment, control and exploitation methods also serve to create more targeted, based on specific needs, prevention measures, as well as to create adequate communication messages and campaigns.

According to the report of the National Commission for 2019, Bulgaria is still mainly a country of origin for victims of trafficking in human beings, given the migration situation globally, the country is also becoming a country of transit and destination for victims. Formally or informally identified victims of the crime are mainly Bulgarian citizens. According to the official statistics of the registered pre-trial proceedings, the trend continues to be that majority of victims of trafficking are girls and women, according to the data provided by the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria. As at global and European level, and in Bulgaria, the highest number of registered cases of trafficking is for sexual exploitation. At the same time, there has been an increase in the trafficking of Bulgarian citizens for the purpose of organised begging, mainly of men, to countries in Western Europe, especially France and Sweden. They are often persons with disabilities who are taken to Western Europe and forced to beg, as well as persons who are homeless, without relatives and in a difficult financial situation. More and more specialists are also focusing on other less readily recognisable forms of trafficking, including crimes similar to trafficking in human beings, which are or have a high potential to be trafficked and exploited (for example, fictitious or early marriages). The increase in traffic for labour exploitation continues, which is also noticeable in previous years. For 2019, there are no significant changes in the created risk profiles of victims of trafficking and traffickers; as described above, the leading form is for sexual exploitation (lewd activities), mainly the victims being young women and girls, taking into account isolated cases of men and boys who are victims of the same crime. Individuals are often of working age, from areas with high unemployment, low social status, without or with low education and no particular profession, living in difficult conditions and with financial difficulties. The higher standard of living in Western European countries, the existing high level of demand for the services offered, as well as the striving of participants in criminal schemes and victims for quick profits provoke the relative sustainability of the levels of criminal activity. Foreign nationals who have been granted refugee or migrant status and who are looking for an option to reach countries in Western Europe where their relatives already live are also vulnerable to being more easily involved in a situation of trafficking and exploitation. In relation to forced prostitution and sexual exploitation, countries where prostitution is legalised are generally preferred, there is demand for services provided by potential victims of trafficking, or there is more liberal legislation on factors affecting areas of exploitation. Domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation is concentrated in Sofia and major cities, while at the Black Sea and mountain resorts have seasonal activity.

One of the main functions of the Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings by law, as well as being part of the National Programme, is the work on prevention, including the implementation of information campaigns. The ten local committees in the country, established to the respective municipalities and with members from the relevant institutions and organisations, are also working on prevention, maintaining a network of volunteers and increasing the capacity of the specialists.

Each year, the NCCTHB organises three main and national prevention and information campaigns. Between October 2019 and October 2020, the National Commission has implemented four national campaigns as follows:

- National campaign on the occasion of 18 October – the European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings, with a focus on the rights of victims of trafficking initiated by the European Crime Prevention Network and Europol. The campaign was held simultaneously in 24 European countries under the title “Are you a victim of human trafficking? You have rights!”, implemented

in Bulgaria in partnership between General Directorate for Combating Organised Crime and NCCTHB in the period October-November 2019. For the purposes of the campaign, a video was created in Bulgarian, Russian and English, as well as various printed information materials for distribution.

- National Campaign for Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings for Labour Exploitation 2020. The campaign took place between May and June under the title “Human Trafficking is real” with the media support of Investor Media Group. The main objective was to raise awareness and sensitivity of society and risk groups regarding the mechanisms for engaging in the crime, as well as to draw attention to specific signs of identifying victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, rising unemployment has created preconditions for accepting questionable job offers, which has actually increased the risk of being trafficked for labour exploitation.
- National Campaign for Prevention of Sexual Exploitation 2020 (summer campaign) took place in the period July-August. The campaign included numerous prevention and information activities implemented by the 10 local committees in the country and the network of volunteers to them. Part of the activities included, in addition to information meetings, a study of the media coverage of the crime “trafficking in human beings” initiated by the volunteers of the Local Committee in Varna; a webinar for journalists from Blagoevgrad and Burgas with a focus on ethical norms of journalistic practice in reporting cases related to the crime; sub-campaign “Blue Heart” on the occasion of 30 July, organised in the city of Varna from the Local Committee and the Prevention Directorate – Varna Municipality; Youth Academy for “Doers of Good” and Youth Start-up Fest in Burgas and others.
- National campaign on the occasion of October 18 – the European Anti-Trafficking Day 2020, which was announced on October 15 and will last until the end of November 2020. The campaign is organised under the title “Trafficking for sexual exploitation is real” with the support of Investor Media Group, Bulgarian National Radio and Bulgarian National Television. Specially created video spot, focusing on specific identifiers and risky proposals, audio spot for radio broadcasts, as well as numerous electronic banners and visions positioned in electronic media, dating sites and others are distributed. The campaign is also disseminated on social networks in view of the importance of reaching more closely targeted groups.

The campaigns are carried out annually in co-operation with the local committees for combating trafficking in human beings, some of the sub-activities of the campaigns are aimed at informing and involving certain vulnerable groups of persons; others are focused on a certain region in the country and a certain country of destination, for which there is preliminary information based on an appropriate analysis that people precisely from a specific settlement in Bulgaria migrate to a specific place in Europe. Often, to reach and communicate messages, especially with some vulnerable groups, there is a co-operation with professionals and organisations working in the field and making direct contact with vulnerable persons; very often through discussions and focus groups. Only for 2019, local anti-trafficking committees have implemented more than 70 prevention projects at local and regional level, including campaigns and projects for working with vulnerable persons, mainly from the Roma community, as well as working with children and volunteers; more than 40,000 people have been reached.

It is extremely important that the NCCTHB also finances the only services in the country intended only for formally identified or presumed adult victims of trafficking (who are entitled to accommodation along with their children). The services are managed in strategic partnership with NGOs that have undergone an appropriate public procedure. One of the five services in the country (available as of the end of October 2020) is supporting the subsequent reintegration of victims of trafficking and thus preventing/reducing the risk of re-trafficking.

The General Directorate “National Police” (GDNP) participates as a partner in an international project of the Organisation for Security and co-operation in Europe (OSCE) entitled “*Effective Criminal Justice Strategies and Practices to Combat Gender-based Domestic Violence in Eastern Europe*”. Partners in the project are Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. In addition to the GDNP, other state institutions are

included in the project, such as: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice through the National Institute of Justice, the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria and representatives of academic and non-governmental organisations (“Centre for the Study of Democracy” and “Alliance for Protection against Gender-Based Violence”). One of the objectives of the project is to increase the readiness of victims to report acts of violence by enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement and judicial authorities, investigative institutions, medical professionals and social workers.

On 25 November 2019 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), an international information campaign in the countries participating in the project was simultaneously launched. Information materials (poster, card, audio recording and video) were designed and used to raise citizens’ awareness of the problem of domestic violence and promote their civil activity. The message that was chosen for Bulgaria was “Stop domestic violence! Violence starts with shouting, but should not end in silence.” On 25 November 2019, in the buildings of all the Regional Directorates of the Interior, the Police Departments, the Police Stations and the reception rooms of the police inspectors placed in a prominent place (*on the inside of the front door glass, on a dashboard with information materials, next to the counter for issuing Bulgarian identity documents, etc.*) posters with the campaign message and the phones that citizens can call. The police inspectors serving the small settlements held talks with mayors and mayoral deputies with a view to including them in the campaign and placing posters in city hall buildings. Posters were also provided to the district and regional Prosecutor's Offices in the served territory, as the Prosecutor's Office is also one of the key partners in the project.

In November 2019, GDNP-MoI signed a contract for the implementation of a predefined project (Reg. No. 812108-71/5 November 2019) on the topic “*Improving the Efficiency of Police Activities in the Field of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence*” under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (NFM) 2019-2021, the Home Affairs and Security Programme, valued at 620,000€. One of the main activities of the project is the creation of **an automated information system (AIS) for combating and preventing crimes based on sex and domestic violence.**

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

In order to ensure equal opportunities for women and men, the current Bulgarian legislation makes no difference by sex, except in specific cases of protection of women (for example, in pregnancy and maternity). Protection against all forms of discrimination is governed by the Law on Protection against Discrimination (LPD), which is intended to provide every person with the right to: equality before the law; equality of treatment and of opportunities to participate in public life; and effective protection against discrimination.

According to Article 9 of LPD the burden of proof is reversed “in proceedings for protection against discrimination after the party alleging discrimination present facts on the basis of which it can be assumed that there is discrimination, the respondent must prove that the principle of equal treatment has not been breached”. Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) created pursuant to LPD is an independent government body to prevent discrimination, protect against discrimination and ensure equality of opportunities. Proceedings before the commission are initiated on a complaint of the persons concerned, an initiative of the commission and signals from individuals and legal entities, state and municipal bodies. No fees are charged for proceedings before the CPD. In fulfilment of the obligation to provide independent legal assistance to victims of discrimination when filing complaints about discrimination (Article 47, item 9 of the Law on Protection from Discrimination) at the CPD reception room and by phone consult citizens.

The CPD provides free consultations when submitting complaints and signals in the reception room of the CPD, as well as in the offices of its regional representatives for all citizens on the territory of the country.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) has regional representatives, which makes it unique in Europe. They have an obligation to provide independent legal assistance to citizens, to advise and inform them of the implementation of the Law on Protection against Discrimination, of the powers and rules of proceedings before the Commission, on the possibilities to protect the violation of the right to equal treatment, including for their procedural powers in the proceedings before the CPD.

Over the years, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination has conducted a series of training for employees of the police and prosecution system, as well as an assessment of the needs for more effective counteraction to discrimination. On this occasion, in December 2017, the Director of the Intolerance and Discrimination Directorate of the OSCE visited the Republic of Bulgaria. A working meeting with the Commission for Protection against Discrimination is planned to discuss future joint activities on hate crimes and other forms of intolerance.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

According to the provisions of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, one of the principles of the state policy on equality between women and men is the balanced representation of women and men in all decision-making bodies; and overcoming gender-based stereotypes.

The Law on Protection against Discrimination (Article 41) imposes requirements on the nine-member composition of the CPD, indicating that in the process of electing or appointing members of the Commission the principles of balanced inclusion of women and men and inclusion of persons from ethnic minorities should be respected.

In the selection of members of the CPD the principle of equality men - women was observed, as women are five and men are four.

Within the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development HRD 2014-2020, under the procedure "Improving working conditions in Bulgaria by reducing the conditions for discrimination", BG05M9OP001-3.017 in mid-2018 launched a project entitled "Anti-discrimination on the labour market" for a period of 24 months. The aim of the project is to systematise the practices for equal opportunities and non-discrimination in order to promote, institutionalise and certify the policies on equality and non-discrimination in the workplace. Also, improve the application of the principle of equality in employment and occupation in both the public and private sectors, in particular as regards the prevention of different treatment in employment and working conditions in relation to other employees due to their belonging to a certain ethnicity, sex, religion, etc. The project is aimed at CPD employees, MLSP employees, representatives of organisations and institutions involved in the implementation of policies in the field of working conditions, social inclusion, health care, equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

4.2 Policy changes

The CPD provides equality between employees of different sexes, equal opportunities for realisation, overcoming obstacles in all areas of public life, as men and women are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without restricting the social role of their sex.

In addition to the national level, the Commission participates in the implementation of the international project "Parents of Work" under the Programme: Rights, Equality and Citizenship at the EU; REC-AG-2018. The CPD is a partner with the head of the Institute for Prevention of Discrimination - Belgium. The other project partners are the Commissions of Portugal and Estonia.

The planned activities for the project are:

- Activity 1: Exchange of good practices at EU level regarding pregnancy, maternity and work-life balance and employer involvement;
- Activity 2: Raising the awareness of employers at national level and collecting and disseminating good practices regarding the balance during pregnancy, motherhood/parenthood and working life;
- Activity 3: Exchange of good practices at EU level on research and detection of cases of discrimination against parents, incl. number of pregnant women.

4.3 Institutional changes

The amendments and supplements to the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria adopted in 2019 have created minimum national requirements for scientific, teaching, artistic and sporting activities, which must be met by candidates for obtaining a scientific degree and for occupying the academic positions of “Principal Assistant”, “Associate Professor” and “Professor”.

The minimum national requirements are set without creating a condition for discriminatory circumstances of any kind. Minimum national requirements are a set of rules, each of which is determined by the numerical values of one or more objectively measurable indicators relating to the relevant scientific field and/or professional field, such as: 1) science metric indicators reflecting scientific results and their reflection in scientific literature and/or indicators reflecting measurable achievements in artistic, creative or sporting activities and 2) indicators reflecting measurable academic results in teaching. This ensures equality between women and men in academic positions in higher education institutions and does not favour privileges and restrictions related to age, race, nationality, ethnicity, sex, social origin, political views, and religion.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination pays serious and special attention to young professionals, in order to improve a young professional who is dedicated to the protection of human rights and equality for all. Senior employees train new employees, without specifying a period. The result is important for us, namely the retention of young and capable staff with the priority goal - protection of citizens’ rights.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

In the EIGE Gender Equality Index 2020, Bulgaria is in 6th place in the EU in the domain of “Power”. Seven of the members of the Council of Ministries, including 2 of the Deputy Prime Ministers, in the current Government are women. The Ombudsperson of Bulgaria, chairpersons of Commission for Protection against Discrimination, Council for Electronic Media, Bulgarian Olympic Committee, mayor of capital city of Sofia are woman. Since Bulgaria’s accession to the EU in 2007, the European Commissioner from Bulgaria has always been a woman. Currently a Bulgarian woman is the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund. Woman is vice-president of the Republic of Bulgaria. In the current 44th National Assembly 27% of the current MPs are women, including the President of the National Assembly. 7 of the 23 Standing Committees are headed by women. Out of 17 Bulgarian MPs at the European Parliament, 5 are women.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

According to Article 3 of the Protection against Discrimination Act, all natural persons on the territory of the country have the right to protection. According to Article 3, paragraph 2 Associations of natural persons, as well as legal entities, enjoy the rights under this law when they are discriminated based on the grounds under Article 4, paragraph 1, in respect of their membership or of the persons employed in them.

5.2 Policy changes

The State Agency for Refugees, the Migration Directorate at the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate "Border Police", as well as the main international and non-governmental organisations working with asylum-seekers are part of the Institutional Framework of the National Mechanism for Referral and Support of Trafficked Persons, co-ordinated by the administration of the NCCTHB.

Within the reporting period and part of the annual National Programme for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of Victims are implemented activities by the NCCTHB administration, in partnership with non-governmental organisations, mainly aimed at upgrading the capacity of specialists for early identification, referral and protection of victims of trafficking, including among applicants for international protection, migrants and refugees.

One of the activities carried out in connection with the implementation of the National Programme for 2019, as well as on the occasion of the launched project "Complex Integration Support for Legally Residing Third-Country Nationals", with leading organisation "Caritas - Sofia" in partnership with the Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria (CRWB), there was a workshop held on 4 October 2019 with focus on first level identification and referral of victims of trafficking. The target group of the training are social workers and specialists from the mobile teams at Caritas - Sofia and CRWB, working with asylum-seekers, migrants, as well as persons who were granted status in Bulgaria. This includes mediators, translators, psychologists and legal counsel. In order to discuss the cultural features that affect the communication and support of nationals from third-country to the EU, as well as to discuss the topic of integration of these persons in Bulgaria, including the prevention of falling into schemes of exploitation and trafficking, UNHCR representatives are invited as lecturers in some of the modules. The result of the training is increased understanding of the teams about the role of mediation and advocacy in the processes of social adaptation and integration, as well as upgrading the possibilities for identification of third-country nationals involved (or at risk of involvement) in the crime of trafficking in human beings (domestic or international) for the purpose of forced labour, sexual exploitation or other forms of trafficking. 22 specialists actively participate in the training.

In the meantime, it is important to note that in the implementation of the annual national programmes of the National Commission, in previous reporting periods the NCCTHB administration has conducted training of various specialists: social workers, registrars, accommodation and interviewers from State Agency for Refugees centres in the country, social mediators, experts from non-governmental organisations, representatives of the Migration Directorate and the available centres of the Directorate, GD Border Police, representatives of the Agency for Social Assistance (Child Protection Department), representatives of community social services, lawyers and interpreters, in relation to human trafficking among migrant flows seeking protection, and refugees. The objectives of this training were avoiding and preventing crime among migrants and asylum-seekers, as well as upgrading the capacity of participants to identify victims of trafficking, especially among third-country nationals of the EU, risk and needs assessment and referral of victims. The training also contributed to improving the co-ordination and mechanisms of interaction in order to improve the work on specific cases, as well as knowledge of the available resources for response – institutional and organisational, respectively their effective use.

Beyond that, the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings has created and provides for the dissemination among the risk groups of appropriate information materials, including a short video/short film, with educational focus on the problems related to trafficking in human beings and the risks of involvement, among vulnerable groups of migrants and third-country nationals residing on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The State Agency for Refugees with the Council of Ministers (SAR) creates the necessary conditions for achieving equality between woman and men in carrying out activities and in the provision of care and services for asylum seekers accommodated in its territorial units.

Equal access to health, social, psychological, educational, labour and other care is provided for persons seeking international protection.

SAR implements policies and measures in the field of migration and asylum, taking into account the special situation of migrants, refugees, women and girls affected by armed conflict. The implemented measures aim to ensure the adaptation and integration of women and girls seeking international protection, as well as to prevent all forms of exploitation, ill-treatment, violence or discrimination.

Measures to eliminate discrimination against women and girls seeking international protection in the Republic of Bulgaria include:

- Early identification of specific vulnerabilities, needs assessment and provision of timely care and services, which should continue throughout the status determination procedure, taking into account the specific needs of women and girls;
- Establishing guarantees that women and girls seeking international protection, if possible, will be provided with an interviewer and interpreter of the same sex;
- Arranging training for SAR staff and translators working with women and girls;
- Providing psychological support for women and girls subject to discrimination based on sex;
- Providing special care for the children of women and girls subjected to discrimination based on sex;
- Providing a safe and well-intentioned environment for women and girls seeking international protection in order to prevent gender-based violence.

The Agency's actual priorities are focused on improving existing monitoring systems, setting policy objectives related to the protection of women's and girls' rights and monitoring their impact. In this context, we work to disseminate more information on methods that prevent violations of their rights and to raise awareness among the society about the problems they encounter in engaging in educational activities.

5.3 Institutional changes

With regard to the Rule of Law and Non-Discrimination Sector and the long-term goal: Effective implementation of existing legislation in the event of discrimination and hate speech based on racism, xenophobia, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination will be involved in implementing the envisaged measures, with in view of its preventive function and its powers enshrined in the special law, as follows:

- Conduct research on the state of discrimination against the Roma population in the areas of employment, health care, housing policy, poverty levels, social security and isolation.
- Combating discriminatory practices against ethnic groups in all areas, in particular by analysing specific cases of discrimination against members of these groups who have been informed about the CPD, the Ombudsman and others.

In co-operation with UNICEF, UNHCR and other stakeholders regarding the improvement of the situation of migrant women and girls and asylum seekers in the Republic of Bulgaria, SAR works in the field of exchange of good practices, co-operation and communication with national institutions responsible for the protection and promotion of their rights, representatives of local governments and the non-governmental sector. Protection measures tailored to their specific needs include: access to a safe place for living and care; searching for families; providing appropriate social, health and psychological care; the right to access compulsory education, which includes language courses, literacy, learning and lifelong learning programmes; independently, non-formal education and cultural exchange in the inclusion and empowerment of women and girls; expanding access to higher education for refugee women and girls; stable and transparent procedures for recognition of

qualifications acquired abroad; access to a complaint mechanism; legal advice/legal representation; interpreters; conducting interviews and consultations.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

At appropriate places, at the reception areas of the territorial units (TU) of SAR are placed specially developed brochures by the International Organisation for Migration on human trafficking and voluntary return, translated into different languages – Pashtu, Dari, Arabic, Farsi (Persian) and English, have been placed. In addition, specially developed brochures by the European Commission on the procedure in accordance with Regulation (EU) 604/2013, translated into different languages – Pashtu, Dari, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, French and English, have also been placed in the reception areas of the TU of SAR.

Each TU has screens that display several films on prevention of human trafficking:

- Human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation;
- Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation;
- Protection of unaccompanied children, victims of human trafficking.

General information on the problems of human trafficking and protection granted by official institutions is provided to SAR by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. These films, along with other informational materials, are constantly presented in the TU of SAR, in order to inform and prevent THB incidents. SAR experts and representatives of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee conduct weekly individual consultations with unaccompanied residents in the Safety zone in the Registration and Reception Centres (RRC) - Sofia. The goal is to inform about the possibilities of the Dublin procedure and to reduce the practice of escaping and illegally travelling to another country with corresponding risks to the safety and security of children.

In October 2020, social experts of SAR participated in a workshop on the integration of women, migrants, victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and other forms of gender-based violence. The seminar was organised by “Animus Association Foundation” on the topic: “Opportunities for employment and integration of women victims of trafficking”.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

The Deputy Chair of the CPD Assoc. Prof. Baki Husseinov, PhD, prepared a special report “Discrimination and protection of women in the field of labour”, which pays special attention to Roma women, it was adopted by a decision of the nine-member CPD.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Integration of the principle of equal treatment of women and men in legislation and in all national, regional and local policies, strategies, programmes and plans is enshrined in the Act on Equality between Women and Men as the main approach in the implementation of the state policy on equality between women and men.

6.2 Policy changes

The Council of Ministers defines the state policy on equality between women and men. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy directs, co-ordinates and controls the implementation of the state policy on equality of women and men. In the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy there is a specialised unit – the Department on Equal Opportunities, Anti-Discrimination and Social Assistance Benefits (EOASAB), responsible for organising and co-ordinating policy, involved in the development and analysis of the implementation of national action plans in fostering equality between women and men and other documents. Participates in committees, working groups and programmes in the field of equality between women and men and anti-discrimination at European and national level. The Department is also a Secretariat of the National Council on Equality between Women and Men at

Council of Ministers. In carrying out its duties, the Department maintains relations with other public authorities, as well as with other research institutions and non-governmental organisations active in this field.

The EOASAB Department works in close co-operation with officials of central and territorial executive bodies, designated as co-ordinators on equality between women and men.

Representatives of the competent institutions are involved in the institutional mechanism for equality between women and men, consisting of the National Council on Equality between Women and Men and the co-ordinators on equality between women and men.

Respecting the long-term active position and will to overcome inequality between women and men in the Republic of Bulgaria, through the implementation of the Equality of Women and Men Act, which entered into force in 2016, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination seeks and applies the principles of:

- Equality in the pay system for women and men;
- Active use of the qualities and skills of women, using for better reconciliation of professional and family life, enabling through the subordination in the state administration, to adapt the young specialists entering our work;
- Creating a balance between man and women in management positions;
- Providing opportunities to provide reliable, competent and timely, free assistance to victims of discrimination;
- In order to prevent and ensure equality in the opportunities of citizens located in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria conducting training seminars and awareness campaigns by members of the CPD and employees.

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination was awarded a Distinctive Badge for significant achievements in the effective implementation of the policy on equality of women and men in the Republic of Bulgaria for 2020.

6.3 Institutional changes

The Act on Equality between Women and Men also regulates the working institutional mechanism, which includes the National Council on Equality between Women and Men at the Council of Ministers and the co-ordinators of equality between women and men.

The designated co-ordinators co-operate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, as those their functional responsibilities are defined in their job descriptions or by order issued by the hiring state authority. To date, there are persons designated by the central executive bodies and all 28 regional administrations as co-ordinators for equality between women and men.

During the reporting period, the National Council on Equality between Women and Men provided opinions on draft documents related to the equality between of women and men, such as the Report on Equality between Women and Men in Bulgaria for 2019 and the National Strategy for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men 2021-2030.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In order to increase the expertise of the co-ordinators for equality between women and men, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy conducted one online training for them during the reporting on 2 October 2020.

CROATIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The hate crime in Croatia is enshrined in Article 87 paragraph 21 of the Criminal Code and it includes sex as basis for a crime. The Act on Amendments to the Criminal Code which entered into force on 1 January 2020 raised the special minimum prison sentence for a number of qualified forms of crimes committed out of hatred. Furthermore, the commission of the criminal offense of threatening out of hatred has become a qualified form of that criminal offense, punishable by imprisonment from six months to five years.

The draft of the new Law on Electronic Media calls for the respect of gender equality principles and prohibit the incitement, favouritism and incitement to hatred or discrimination based on, inter alia, gender, gender identity, expression or sexual orientation, has entered into the public discussion.

1.2 Policy changes

The Office for Gender Equality (OGE) is currently in the process of writing the new National Plan/Policy for Gender Equality 2021-2027 which will include combating and prevention of stereotypes and sexism as one of the thematic areas.

Regarding the removal of obstacles to women's labour market participation "Make a Wish" call for proposal has been implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (MLPSFSP) with an aim to promote economic independence for women and facilitate women's labour market participation. Following the Phase I, in February 2020, the MLPSFSP published an open Call for Proposals. Since October 2019 until end of September 2020 financing has been approved for 265 projects by beneficiaries – local and regional self-government units and non-profit organisations, in the total value of 466,800,000 HRK (61,400,000 EUR). Through these projects, it is planned to employ 4,734 women who will be taking care and providing support for nearly 28,327 elderly and disadvantaged people in their households. In order to make women more competitive in the labour they will be provided with additional education for occupations deficient in their local community market upon completion of the projects' activities. In the selection of projects emphasis was placed on under-developed areas according to development index (mostly rural and islands) and those areas where the unemployment rate are higher than the Croatian average.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In relation to raising awareness to address sexism, gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination in general or affecting a particular community different state bodies implemented campaigns and projects during the reporting period. The Ministry of Interior has been implementing the preventive project "Together against hate speech" since 2017 aimed at prevention of various forms of hate speech against certain social groups or its members. During 2020, a total of 43 public events took place and 1,914 people were educated on that matter. In order to strengthen the social inclusion of minority social groups in the community, the Ministry of Interior has been implementing project "I have a choice" since the school year 2012/2013. Through the implementation of it components, the project aims at preventing peer violence and vandalism and domestic violence and violence against women, risky and socially unacceptable behaviours of children and youth, drug and other addiction, reducing the risk of human trafficking and strengthening traffic culture. The Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities (GOHRRNM) is continuously implementing both mainstream and targeted activities with an aim of reduction of vulnerability of persons belonging to Roma communities. On the basis of the baseline survey conducted on 2017-2018 on the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy, recommendations for relevant public policies has been provided in five sectoral publications, including youth and women, as a part of the project "Roma Inclusion: Fulfilling Preconditions for Successful Implementation of National Minority Policies - PHASE I". The aim of the project is contributing to the overall inclusion of the members of

Roma national minority into Croatian society through a variety of activities. For example, a documentary film on successful young Roma women has been made and widely distributed, showing Roma women outside of usual stereotypes and traditional gender roles.⁹ These activities are meant to encourage young Roma women to get involved in education and other areas and breaking of stereotypes and prejudices on Roma women among majority population.

The Ombudswoman for Gender Equality's 2019 Annual Report describes in detail 13 cases related to sexism in media content, sexism in language, offensive and humiliating portrayal of persons based on sexual orientation, and explains in detail the negative trends in media reporting, which includes presentation and evaluation of women in politics based on their physical appearance and the way they dress, sexist statements of the public figures and gender stereotypes in educational materials. The Ombudswoman has also analysed the presidential campaign and explained why the criticism of women in politics is much harsher and includes many inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or patronizing expressions based on sex which are not present, or are present to a negligible extent, when it comes to male politicians.

The OGE has translated and published in 1,000 copies the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism, organised its promotion in November 2019 by marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and disseminated the document to all members of the Croatian Parliament. Croatian version of Recommendation is also available for download on the website of the OGE.¹⁰

In July 2019, the Electronic Media Agency and partner institutions, including the OGE and governmental organisations (Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, and Central State Office for the Development of Digital Society) as well as Equality bodies (The Ombudsperson and The Ombudsperson for Gender Equality), Croatian Olympic Committee and NGOs signed The Agreement of co-operation with the aim to promote gender equality in media. The website www.zeneimediji.hr and a Facebook page *Žene i mediji* (Women and the Media) were created as another step towards raising the awareness of the public and media workers of gender inequality and stereotypes in the media

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Developments regarding media have been under auspices of Ministry of Culture and Media. In 2020 financial resources from the Fund for promotion of pluralism and diversity of electronic media for programmes that support awareness raising on gender equality and other constitutional values were awarded as follows: 744,968 HRK for radio publishers, 1,064,493 HRK for TV publishers, 49,126 HRK for satellite, cable, internet and other providers, 343,361 HRK to non-profit providers of electronic publications and 111,541 HRK to non-profit producers of radio and AV programme.

In 2019, the Ministry of Culture and Media launched "Community Media – Support to Social Inclusion Through Media, Phase I, call for project proposals under the Operational Programme of European Social Fund/ESF Efficient Human Resources 2014 – 2020". Out of 13 selected projects, 3 include activities related to gender equality issues – "New Waves of Goodness," "Transmitter" and "Spotlight" – mostly focused on portrayal of women in media.

Continuous use of gender sensitive language in announcements for education, contest or invitation that are intended equally for women and men both in the police system and outside of it, especially the introduction of comprehensive campaign in 2018, ultimately achieved a greater representation of women in the Education Programme at the Police Academy. The number of women from 2013/2014 until 2019/2020 increased from 16.4% to 32%.

⁹ <https://manjine.hrt.hr/620277/premijera-tri-mlade-romkinje-dokaz-da-se-moze-uspjeti> (in Croatian)

¹⁰ <https://ravnopravnost.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Vije%C4%87e%20Europe/Preporuka%20VE%20Sprjecavanje%20i%20borba%20protiv%20seksizma.pdf>

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

In January 2020, amendments to the several laws dealing with domestic violence and gender-based violence have entered into force. The amendments were triggered by a couple of severe cases of crimes committed against women, including murders, all committed during the course of 2018/2019. With the amendments to the Criminal Code which entered into force the definition of rape has been changed and penalties for female genital mutilation; bodily injury, severe personal injury, particularly serious personal injury, rape, serious criminal offenses against sexual freedom, lewd acts, sexual harassment, and domestic violence have been raised. In line with the Istanbul Convention the Croatian Parliament terminated the criminal offence of sexual intercourse without consent and for the first time legally defined sexual consent. Consent is understood as when a person chooses to enter into sexual intercourse with her own will and was able to make and express such a decision. According to the new concept, the crime of rape is considered as any non-consensual sexual intercourse or sexual activity equated with it, i.e. even when there is no use of force or threat to the life and body of the raped or other person. The amendments to the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence include higher penalties for all forms of domestic violence while physical violence has been redefined with the aim to more clearly distinguish misdemeanours from criminal offenses. Increase in sentences also includes penalties for professionals who in their work come into contact with victims of domestic violence and do not report it.

Regarding to the case-law development, there was a case in which more than ten women have reported to the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality continuous harassment and sexual harassment by the vice president of the Croatian Employer Association (HUP). Based on their complaints, the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality filed a criminal complaint against the vice president of the HUP as well as issued a warning to HUP against re-victimizing victims with its decision to sign consensual termination employment agreement with the perpetrator (which included enormous severance pay) instead of just firing him. The case is currently pending before the criminal court.

2.2 Policy changes

Out of 19 shelters in Croatia, the MLPSFSP continuously supports the work of 17 shelters by allocating approximately 6,500,000 HRK annually. During 2019/2020 the MLPSFSP undertook numerous measures for the establishment of the shelters in six counties which do not provide for shelters for victims of domestic violence. Related to that the MLPSFSP issued a limited call for the purpose of establishing, equipping and carrying out programme activities for new shelters in a period of up to 30 months from the date of conclusion the contract. The MLPSFSP also provided funding for the active 24-hour on-call duty available on a total of seven SOS telephones.

As mentioned earlier the OGE is currently in the process of writing the new National Plan/Policy for Gender Equality 2021-2027 which will include combating and prevention of gender-based violence as a thematic area, including implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

2.3 Institutional changes

In partnership with the Ministry of Justice and Administration, the MLPSFSP has been implementing the project "Stop Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - There is No Justification for Violence" with funds from the European Social Fund. One of the activities is to provide a 24-hour toll-free telephone line for victims by expanding the working hours (0-24) and scope of the National Call Centre for Victims of Crime - 116 006 (currently open from Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 8 pm).

Based on the Agreement on Inter-Ministerial co-operation in Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence signed in 2018 a national team and county team have been established for the purpose of prevention and combating violence against women and domestic violence. By the end of 2019, all county teams held constituent meetings, and during 2020 undertook activities set out in the work plans for the current year. At the end of June 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, two online meetings were held with representatives of county teams in order to further

agree on the implementation of activities and the implementation of training programmes for representatives of county teams.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

As a COVID-19 pandemic response in 2020 the Ministry of the Interior, in co-operation with the Child Protection Polyclinic of the City of Zagreb and Degordian, a digital agency, launched “Iza vrata” (Eng. “Behind the Door”) campaign aimed at increasing social response and recognizing violence against children, including sexual and digital violence, as well as any other form of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, and encouraging citizens to report suspected abuse immediately to the police. Furthermore, since the premiere presentation at the company “Borovo” in Vukovar in June 2019, a preventive project called “Lily” has been continuously implemented throughout Croatia aimed at preventing all forms of violence against women. The project itself has a multinodular character and is continuously implemented through an interconnected series of activities with the aim of networking all competent state bodies, civil society organisations, legal entities and other socially responsible entities. During 2020, as part of the “Lily” project, a large number of events were held, attended by over 15,000 people and over 5,000 pieces of promotional material had been distributed. Regarding research experts and researchers at the Police Academy conducted two scientific researches in 2020:

1. Victimological Characteristics of Domestic Violence with Special Reference to the Legal Qualification of the Offence, and
2. Survey on the attitudes of participants of the Adult Education Programme for the Police Officer Profession on the gender and minority issues.

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in 2019, the MLPSFSP presented project “Stop violence against women and domestic violence - There is no excuse for violence”. The 26-month project includes public awareness activities in the combating violence against women and domestic violence, strengthening the capacity of experts and improving interdepartmental co-operation and the improvement of the 24-hour telephone line service. In addition, the MLPSFSP developed a new Manual with Guidelines for Reporting on Domestic Violence, which contains an overview of the Council of Europe's recommendations on the portrayal of women in the media, and an overview of Croatian legislation containing provisions on media reporting on domestic violence.

In order to facilitate victims of domestic violence participation in the labour market, the Croatian Employment Service continuously implements active labour market policy measures and activities in the period 2017-2022. Active labour market policy measures have been carried out through the activities of lifelong career guidance and career development and measures of active policy of co-financing and financing employment defined by the Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Active Labour Market Policy in the Republic of Croatia for the period 2018 – 2020. In 2019, 165 persons - victims of domestic violence - were employed through the employment mediation services provided by the Croatian Employment Service and ten unemployed persons – victims of domestic violence - were included in Active labour market policy measures.

The Ombudswoman for Gender Equality had been implementing the EU project “Building more effective protection: transforming the system for combating violence against women” until 31 December 2019. The project included analysis of over 1,000 final verdicts concerning gender-based violence. The results were published in 2019 in 2 publications on the basis of which the educational modules have been developed. Modules included various target groups – judges of county and municipal courts, state attorneys (120), police officers (160), media representatives (75) and 464 women victims of violence within the counselling activities of the project partner. Special efforts were made to sensitise the general public about the importance of combating violence against women and femicide. In addition, two in-depth analyses of media coverage on reporting about violence against women and femicide were conducted and published, on the basis of which the “Media Codex - Guide for Professional and Sensitised

Media Reporting on Violence against Women and Femicide” was developed and published. The Guidelines for sensitive media reporting on violence against women and femicide were signed by 13 media publishers who committed to respect them and another follow-up analysis of the media respect of these guidelines was conducted. Certain progress in some aspect of media reporting was noticed.

Former State Office for Sport and the OGE co-operated in a campaign “Start to talk” to call for action to public authorities and the sport movement to stop child sexual abuse. The OGE contributed to the campaign with providing the information about the document: Rules of Procedure in Cases of Sexual Violence and gender dimension of child sexual abuse in sport. In December 2019 director of the OGE held a presentation about mentioned Rules of Procedure on a Conference that launched the national campaign.

Every year, through the organisation of various thematic events, i.e. professional lectures, thematic workshops, public campaigns, round tables and other similar activities, different state bodies mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) and the National Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (22 September).

From 30 to 31 January 2020, the OGE organised the High-level Conference “Participation of women in the labour market – benefit for the society” as a part of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The Conference included discussions on some of the most influential causes of women’s lower participation in the labour market, among others, harassment and sexual harassment in the world of work. 201 representatives of governments, European Commission, European Parliament, civil society, academia, private sector and international organisations from 28 countries attended the Conference. The conclusions of the Conference are made available on this link: <https://ravnopravnost.gov.hr/UserDocImages/dokumenti/ConclusionsRecommendations.pdf>

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The Police Academy at various levels of education and through various programmes conducts continuous education of police officers in the field of human rights, especially violence against women and domestic violence.

The experts of the different states’ bodies – Police Academy, Office for Gender Equality, Ministry of Justice and Administration- along with nongovernmental organisations Victims and Witnesses Support unit and B.a.b.e. have been participating in the HELPLINE project for a second year. The aim of the project is to protect and support victims of gender-based violence by combating non-reporting of such violence by laying the foundation for establishing a free and anonymous telephone line for victims. Telephone line would be anonymous and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The project also promotes multidisciplinary co-operation between competent authorities.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

With regard to the secondary legal aid (legal representation) the Government of Republic of Croatia passed the Regulation in 2019 on the value of the amount for determining the fee for providing secondary legal aid in which the value of points has been increased from 5 HRK to 7 HRK. This change has been applied to stimulate more legal professionals in order to be placed on the list of the Croatian Bar Association to provide secondary legal aid.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

In order to raise awareness and ensure a better understanding among legal professionals of issues related to women’s access to justice, including protection against gender-based violence the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality has published, within the EU project “Building more effective protection: transforming the system for combating violence against women”, the following brochures:

1. Quantitative results of expert analysis of final criminal judgments on violence against women, 2012-2016.
2. Expert analysis of final criminal judgments on violence against women, 2012-2016.
3. Quantitative results of expert analysis of final misdemeanour judgments on violence against women, 2012-2016.
4. Expert analysis of final misdemeanour judgments on violence against women, 2012-2016.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

In accordance with the provisions of the Free Legal Aid Act, the Ministry of Justice and Administration conducted in 2020 a tender for financing projects of authorised associations and law faculties for the provision of primary legal aid. A total of 25 projects of authorised associations and law faculties were financed and a total of 2,109,524 HRK was allocated. That is the largest amount awarded for primary legal aid (legal advice) projects so far. The projects were related to the provision of primary legal assistance to vulnerable social groups, such as socially vulnerable persons. Most authorised associations in their priority area of primary legal aid listed victims of violence and domestic violence and members of national minorities.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes

The Ministry of Justice and Administration, in accordance with the Courts Act and the State Attorneys Act keeps records on all persons employed in courts and state attorneys' offices on the basis of data provided by judicial bodies. The statistical overview of judicial bodies for 2019:

https://pravosudje.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Pravo%20na%20pristup%20informacijama/izvjesce%20o%20stavovima%20sudaca%20i%20drzavnih%20advokata%20za%202019%20godinu/Statisti%C4%8Dko_izvjesce_2019..pdf.

The data shows a higher representation of women in lower courts, so in municipal courts 73.2% are female judges and 26.8% are male judges. As the hierarchy of courts increases, the number of women decreases, which is evident from the data 23.1% of judges in the Constitutional Court and 34.1% of judges in the Supreme Court are women. A very similar trend can be observed in the State Attorney's Offices.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

According to the official parliamentary statistics, in the last parliamentary elections, which were held in July 2020, the female sex/gender is represented in the Croatian Parliament 31% (link: <https://www.sabor.hr/hr/zastupnici/statisticki-pokazatelji>). This represents a significantly better result in comparison with the results of the last elections in 2016 (when only 13% of women were elected).

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Considering the new legislative framework regulating the strategic planning was adopted in Croatia, defining new methodological approach to strategic planning and enabling long-term development planning at the level of national, local and regional-self-government, numerous action plans have been in the process of harmonisation with it, including the New National Human Right Action Plan 2021-2027, which is currently in the drafting process. The New National Human Right Action Plan includes a measure to increase the knowledge of officials working in the field of international protection, public servants in the field of education, health and social welfare and media workers in the field of international protection.

Regarding human trafficking, after a decade of fighting against it in Croatia, the GOHRRNM formed an integral system, which covers all activities from the moment of identifying victims of human trafficking until their full integration into society. Within the system of combating trafficking, co-operation has been established between the competent authorities of state administration and civil society organisations.

The GOHRRNM has initiated the drafting process of a new national document related to the integration of persons under international protection in order to systematise the provisions of guaranteed social services in the following fields: education and language learning, social care, healthcare, employment and accommodation, as well as include important aspects like strengthening intersectoral co-operation and co-operation with local communities, enhancing expert capacities of integration stakeholders and sensitising the general public. The drafting process has been based on a conducted policy analyses which have shown that women who have been granted international protection are particularly vulnerable social with lesser success in socio-economic integration in comparison to men. Women under international protection have less successful educational outcomes and do not fully participate in labour market which makes them a regular users of social welfare benefits. In order to enhance the participation of women under international protection in labour market round table on specific challenges in economic emancipation is to be held including participants for both public and civil sector.

The Constitutional Court has rendered a historic decision related to women refugees in 2019. Namely, the Court concluded that domestic violence is a valid basis/reason for granting asylum. The Court further stated that in case of inconsistency of the applicant's testimony, the competent authorities are obliged to take into account the overall picture when assessing the credibility and to enable same sex interpreters to seekers of international protection.

5.2 Policy changes

Daily work of officers of Ministry of Interior in the field of asylum and reception pays particular attention to the protection of the rights of women and girls applicants for international protection, as well as all members of vulnerable groups. This was also applied in the period from October 2019 to October 2020. Special procedural guarantees have been applied if there are specific personal circumstances on the side of the applicant such as age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, serious illness, mental health or the consequences of torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence. Requests from applicants in such cases must be dealt with priority and applicants must be provided with an interpreter and a case manager of the same sex, and be considered by officers trained to deal with vulnerable groups.

In 2019, the Government adopted the Protocol on the integration/reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings. The system for combating trafficking in human beings in Croatia is based on the principles of respect for the basic human rights of victims of human trafficking, and providing assistance and protection through safe accommodation, psycho-social, health and legal assistance, and the right to a safe return to the country of return. The National Referral Mechanism pays special attention to the aspect of the social and economic integration/reintegration of victims of trafficking in society, as one of the main prerequisites for their successful return and empowerment.

The National Referral Mechanism, which regulates the area of combating human trafficking in Croatia is based on international, European and national standards, which provide the basis for all forms of assistance and protection to the victims of human trafficking. This Protocol applies gender mainstreaming and takes into account the specific health and other needs and risks facing victims of human trafficking with respect to their gender, age, the victim's disability, pregnancy, motherhood or fatherhood, and the sexual orientation and gender identity of the victim.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

In 2019, the percentage of women among persons seeking international protection increased (34.4%) and women were again granted relatively significantly more asylum approvals (42.6%) compared to

males. During the reporting period Croatia also faced an increased influx of asylum seekers arriving in Croatia after months of stay in inadequate accommodation conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, as well as challenges related to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Further efforts were implemented to keep the level of reception and accommodation quality at a high level, especially in relation to protection of vulnerable groups.

Regarding the employment of persons under international protection, 150 of them were registered as unemployed with the Croatian Employment Service, out of which 69 were women on the date of 31 August 2020. The Croatian Employment Service in the co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Science and City of Zagreb have been implementing career guidance activities for pupils' who are asylum seekers with the purpose of their integration into Croatian educational system. Career guidance experts have been providing individualised support and advice for pupils recommending them most suitable educational programmes.

During 2019-2020, officers of the Ministry of Interior participate in continuous education programmes, such as "Interviewing Children" module in Malta, "Trafficking in Human Beings", "Special Social Group" organised by EASO (European Asylum Support Office), "Gender, gender identity and sexual orientation" for the purposes of the procedure of approval of international protection, and online national training (within the EASO curriculum). Training has been targeted to those officers who deal with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

Numerous projects related to migration have been implemented during 2019-2020 by the Ministry of Interior. The Service for Reception and Accommodation of Seekers of International Protection in co-operation with UNHCR, HCK and MDM is in the process of creation of "Standard Operating Procedures on the Response to Sexual and Gender – Based Violence in Reception Centres for International Protection Seekers". In 2020, an implementation of a three-year project "Social Services and Psychosocial Protection", co-financed by the Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration, has begun with the aim of improving the quality of life and psychosocial protection of asylum seekers, carried out in Service for Reception and Accommodation in Zagreb and Kutina by the Croatian Red Cross. In particular, the project aims to empower the most vulnerable members of the asylum seekers population, especially women and children. In addition to the funds from the Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration (AMIF), the project "Disease Prevention, Psychological Support, Access and Assistance in Healthcare for International Care Seekers – 4P" carried out by MDM Belgique and which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, which improves the level of health services available to asylum seekers in Service for Reception and Accommodation in Zagreb and Kutina. Project "Arranging the Shelter for Asylum Seekers in Kutina", has also been implemented with an aim to improve reception and accommodation conditions and the quality of life of asylum seekers housed in shelters. The Ministry of Interior took into the account the special situation of the closure of educational institutions and online teaching during the COVID pandemic and provided activities within the project "Social Services and Psychosocial Protection" to guarantee the same conditions to migrant children as those of Croatian origin.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

In March 2020, the MLPSP has contracted the Evaluation of the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the implementation of the Operational Programme "Efficient Human Resources 2014-2020". and the European Social Fund intervention according to the criteria of regional and local representation with an assessment of horizontal principles (includes gender equality), which is currently underway.

It is estimated that approximately at least 30,000 to 40,000 of elderly people in Croatia do not fulfil the minimum requirements for pension entitlement, out of which a vast majority is women from rural areas who are unable to work or had scarce period of employment, among others, due to taking care of the household and raising the children. In May 2020, the Croatian Parliament adopted the Law on National Benefit for the Elderly ("Official Gazette" No. 62/20) that introduced a new kind of cash

benefit for the elderly in order to improve their financial status. This new national benefit is intended for all Croatian citizens over 65 years of age with permanent residence in Croatia for a continuous period of 20 years, who do not have a minimum insurance period of 15 years to acquire the right to an old-age pension and have no other source of income. The starting amount of the Benefit is 800 HRK per month. The law will enter into force on 1 January 2021.

6.2 Policy changes

On 2 May 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the “Women in Digital Declaration” and commissioned the Central State Office for the Development of Digital Society and the OGE to co-ordinate its implementation. A round table discussions on this topic was held with the aim of introducing the theme of women’s representation in the digital world to the public and encouraging girls to enrol in the STEM area at the relevant faculties. A number of similar round table events have been held during the course of year to encourage secondary school students to choose ICT studies.

6.3 Institutional changes

At the end of 2019, a new County Committee for Gender Equality was established in Splitsko-dalmatinska county with a total of 21 county commissions established by the end of 2019.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

During the last three months of 2019, three workshops, and in 2020, two workshops (in an online format), were conducted in the School for Public Administration on gender equality and gender mainstreaming for public servants working in management and control of ESI funds. The training has been obligatory. A total of 140 civil servants participated in these workshops which have been a regular activity since 2015.

In 2019, the School for Public Administration invited the OGE to nominate a trainer for a new cycle of training for senior civil servants and those in managerial positions on mainstreaming gender into public policies. Three training sessions for 56 participants were held during the reporting period. Evaluation shows that most of the participants confirmed that their knowledge about tools for gender mainstreaming has increased.

One day seminars on gender equality, as part of the annual programme of the School for Public Administration, were organised in October, November and December 2019. It was not possible to organise any in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Civil servants participate in this seminar on a voluntary basis in groups of 15 participants at each of the sessions.

The representative of the OGE is a member of the Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Rural Development Programme of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2014-2020 and the Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Operational Programme for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Croatia for the programming period 2014-2020, with the aim of promoting the role of women in rural policy (horizontal criteria).

The MLPSFSP held online workshop “Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming in Operational Programmes” on 9 and 10 June 2020. This two-day online workshop was focusing on gender equality and gender mainstreaming opportunities and lessons learned for existing and upcoming operational programmes of the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds and the MLPSFSP.

The Croatian Employment Service uses gender mainstreaming in the job mediation web portal “Burza rada”, where active job offers are described in both gender options. This approach is also used in the new version of the computer programme “My Choice” used for e-guidance, which contains descriptions of more than 250 occupations listed in both male and female gender. Furthermore, a portal called e-Guidance was created with a goal to offer pupils, students, unemployed and the employed vocational guidance through e-services. The main assets of the portal are self-assessment questionnaires which help users in assessment of their interests and competences with the purpose

of choosing the right career path, and the assessment of the competences that are desirable in the labour market, such as communication skills, teamwork and so on. Questionnaires contain variations in the male and female gender. Also, the Croatian Employment Service annually publishes regional brochure “Where to go after elementary school?” intended for pupils. In the brochure, the names of all available educational programmes include gender mainstreaming terminology of professions which promote gender equality in the student population. Furthermore, the Croatian Employment Service and CISOK centres (Lifelong career guidance centres) organised a number of various events and activities (career guidance days, workshops, lectures, etc.) where gender non-traditional occupations are presented. Also, gender-sensitive approach in choosing occupation is applied in other regular activities of lifelong career guidance in the Croatian Employment Service. It also implements the active labour market policy measures based on the guidelines for the Implementation and Development of Active Labour Market Policy in the Republic of Croatia for the period from 2018 to 2020. The guidelines define target groups and interventions that are being applied considering specific needs of the target groups that are hard to place on the labour market. In the period between 1 October 2019 and 31 August 2020, the Croatian Employment Service included 23,840 persons into the programmes of the active labour market policy – 10,891 men (46%) and 12,949 women (54%).

6.5 Other pertinent developments

As part of training for public servants on how to mainstream gender in implementation and control of ESI funds, trainers from the OGE developed working materials for participants of the training on gender mainstreaming, namely the checklist for preparation of the calls for proposals, monitoring and evaluation of the funded projects.

Same trainers developed simple written guidelines for gender mainstreaming which, according to the feedback of the one-day training participants, prove to be very useful for the daily work of public servants regarding gender sensitive approach to administration.

8. Additional comments, if any

Croatia is willing to share experience regarding the successful ratification of the Istanbul Convention despite different hurdles, such as anti-gender movements.

**APPENDIX TO CROATIA CONTRIBUTION
STATISTICS**

1. STATISTICS ON JUDICIAL DISPUTES CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION FOR 2019

CIVIL CASES				
GROUNDS FOR DISCRIMINATION	NUMBER OF DISCRIMINATED PERSONS		NUMBER OF DISCRIMINATED PERSONS	
	ACCORDING TO LAWSUIT		ACCORDING TO THE FINAL VERDICT	
	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES
RACE OR ETHNICITY OR SKIN COLOUR	0	1	0	1
SEX	7	2	5	1
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	0	0	0	0
LANGUAGE	0	0	0	0
RELIGION	0	1	0	0
POLITICAL OR OTHER BELIEFS	0	1	0	0
NATIONAL ORIGIN	2	0	1	0
SOCIAL ORIGIN	0	0	0	1
PROPERTY STATUS	0	0	0	0
UNION MEMBERSHIP	0	6	1	1
SOCIAL STATUS	4	7	0	0
MARITAL OR FAMILY STATUS	2	1	0	1
AGE	0	2	0	0
EDUCATION	1	0	0	1
HEALTH CONDITION	0	1	1	0
DISABILITY	1	10	0	1
GENETIC HERITAGE	0	0	0	0
GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION	0	0	0	0

In criminal cases:

According to the indictment only one woman and two men were discriminated against based on race or ethnicity or skin colour, one woman was discriminated against based on sex, one woman and one man were discriminated against based on sexual orientation and six women were discriminated against based on other basics.

According to the final verdict, one woman was discriminated against based on sex, one woman was discriminated against based on sexual orientation and two women were discriminated against based on other basics.

MISDEMEANOUR CASES				
GROUNDS FOR DISCRIMINATION	NUMBER OF DISCRIMINATED PERSONS		NUMBER OF DISCRIMINATED PERSONS	
	ACCORDING UPON REQUEST		ACCORDING TO THE FINAL VERDICT	
		MALES	FEMALES	MALES
RACE OR ETHNICITY OR SKIN COLOUR	3	8	1	7
SEX	21	0	22	0
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2	3	0	2
LANGUAGE	0	0	0	0
RELIGION	1	1	0	1
POLITICAL OR OTHER BELIEFS	0	1	0	3
NATIONAL ORIGIN	20	29	7	8
SOCIAL ORIGIN	1	0	0	0
PROPERTY STATUS	0	0	0	0
UNION MEMBERSHIP	0	0	0	0
SOCIAL STATUS	0	0	0	0
MARITAL OR FAMILY STATUS	0	1	0	0
AGE	0	0	0	0
EDUCATION	0	0	0	0
HEALTH CONDITION	0	0	0	0
DISABILITY	0	0	0	1
GENETIC HERITAGE	0	0	0	0
GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION	0	0	0	0
OTHER BASICS	8	2	4	3

2. STATISTICAL DATA FROM THE FIELD OF APPLICATION OF THE LAW ON PROTECTION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR 2019

NUMBER OF DEFENDANTS FOR COMMITTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	
FEMALES	MALES
1719	6090

AGE OF THE DEFENDANT	FEMALES	MALES
YOUNGER THAN 18 YEARS	26	120
18-30 YEARS	328	1221
31-50 YEARS	797	2819
51-64 YEARS	329	1273
OLDER THAN 65 YEARS	156	505

RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEFENDANT WITH THE VICTIM – INJURED PARTY	FEMALES	MALES
SPOUSE	343	1517
EX-SPOUSE	51	209
UNMARRIED PARTNER	162	619
EX-UNMARRIED PARTNER	28	97
LIFE PARTNER	6	24
EX-LIFE PARTNER	1	7
INFORMAL LIFE PARTNER	10	18
EX-INFORMAL LIFE PARTNER	0	2

NUMBER OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE		
	FEMALES	MALES
NUMBER OF VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES	19	13
NUMBER OF VICTIMS – CHILDREN AND MINORS	234	240
NUMBER OF VICTIMS – OLDER PEOPLE	182	65
TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS	4997	2720

AGE OF THE VICTIM-INJURED PARTY	FEMALES	MALES
YOUNGER THAN 18 YEARS	390	407
18-30 YEARS	866	451
31-50 YEARS	1707	714
51-64 YEARS	879	438
OLDER THAN 65 YEARS	542	268

NUMBER AND TYPES OF UNLAWFUL CONDUCT	FEMALES	MALES
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE	663	2550
PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OR OTHER FORMS OF HUMILIATING TREATMENT	50	82
PSYCHIC VIOLENCE THAT CAUSED A VIOLATION OF DIGNITY AND ANXIETY OF THE VICTIM	1020	4175
SEXUAL VIOLENCE	2	24
ECONOMIC VIOLENCE	67	375
IGNORING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES/OLDER PERSONS	3	12

NUMBER AND TYPES OF IMPOSED SANCTIONS	FEMALES	MALES
CONDITIONAL JAIL SENTENCE	396	1733
UNCONDITIONAL IMPRISONMENT	24	551
MONEY FINE	698	2642
CONDITIONAL SENTENCE WITH SPECIAL OBLIGATIONS	4	80
PROTECTIVE MEASURES	368	2153

3. THE STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF JUDICIAL BODIES FOR 2019

	JUDICIAL OFFICIALS		PUBLIC SERVANTS	
	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES
COURTS	1215	497	5267	646
STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICES	435	200	941	112

	SPECIFICATION PER TYPE OF JUDICIAL BODY			
	JUDICIAL OFFICIALS		PUBLIC SERVANTS	
	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES
MUNICIPAL COURTS (34)	774	272	3932	489
COUNTY COURTS (15)	243	136	612	53
HIGH MISDEMEANOUR COURT (1)	18	7	27	7
COMMERCIAL COURTS (9)	90	29	455	55
HIGH COMMERCIAL COURT (1)	24	8	45	13
ADMINISTRATION COURTS (4)	33	17	94	6
HIGH ADMINISTRATIVE COURT (1)	19	3	47	11
SUPREME COURT (1)	14	25	55	12
MUNICIPAL STATE ATTORNEYS' OFFICES (25)	297	114	652	72
COUNTY STATE ATTORNEYS' OFFICES (15)	100	64	226	30
OFFICE FOR SUPPRESSION OF CORRUPTION AND ORGANISE CRIME (1)	20	13	28	5
STATE ATTORNEY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA OFFICE (1)	18	9	35	5

(OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL)

GROUNDS FOR DISCRIMINATION	NUMBER OF DISCRIMINATED PERSONS – IN CIVIL CASES			
	ACCORDING TO LAWSUIT		ACCORDING TO FINAL VERDICT	
	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES
RACE OR ETHNICITY OR SKIN COLOUR	0	1	0	1
SEX	7	2	5	1
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	0	0	0	0
LANGUAGE	0	0	0	0
RELIGION	0	1	0	0
POLITICAL OR OTHER BELIEFS	0	1	0	0
NATIONAL ORIGIN	2	0	1	0
SOCIAL ORIGIN	0	0	0	1
PROPERTY STATUS	0	0	0	0
UNION MEMBERSHIP	0	6	1	1
SOCIAL STATUS	4	7	0	0
MARITAL OR FAMILY STATUS	2	1	0	1
AGE	0	2	0	0
EDUCATION	1	0	0	1
HEALTH CONDITION	0	1	1	0
DISABILITY	1	10	0	1
GENETIC HERITAGE	0	0	0	0
GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION	0	0	0	0

In criminal cases

According to the indictment, only one woman and two men were discriminated against based on race or ethnicity or skin colour, two women were discriminated against based on sex, one woman and one man were discriminated against based on sexual orientation and six women were discriminated against based on other basics.

According to the final verdict, one woman was discriminated against based on sex, one woman was discriminated against based on sexual orientation and two women were discriminated against based on other basics.

GROUNDS FOR DISCRIMINATION	NUMBER OF DISCRIMINATED PERSONS – IN MISDEMEANOUR CASES			
	ACCORDING TO REQUEST		ACCORDING TO FINAL VERDICT	
	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES
RACE OR ETHNICITY OR SKIN COLOUR	3	8	1	7
SEX	21	0	22	0
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2	3	0	2
LANGUAGE	0	0	0	0
RELIGION	1	1	0	1
POLITICAL OR OTHER BELIEFS	0	1	0	3
NATIONAL ORIGIN	20	29	7	8
SOCIAL ORIGIN	1	0	0	0
PROPERTY STATUS	0	0	0	0
UNION MEMBERSHIP	0	0	0	0
SOCIAL STATUS	0	0	0	0
MARITAL OR FAMILY STATUS	0	1	0	0
AGE	0	0	0	0

EDUCATION	0	0	0	0
HEALTH CONDITION	0	0	0	0
DISABILITY	0	0	0	1
GENETIC HERITAGE	0	0	0	0
GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION	0	0	0	0
OTHER BASICS	8	2	4	3

CYPRUS

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance

In 2020, 16 companies have applied for certification (or renewal of Certification) by the National Gender Equality Certification Body which evaluates enterprises as regards the incorporation, or the implementation of best practices relating to equal treatment and/or equal pay principles in their working environment.

The National Gender Equality Certification Body evaluates enterprises as regards the incorporation, or the implementation of best practices relating to equal treatment and/or equal pay principles in their working environment. Businesses have the right to apply for two kinds of certifications: one for “Equality Employer”, and one for implementing a “Best Practice” relating to equal treatment and/or equal pay. This action has been established as an institution and will continue to be implemented annually.

The certifications are granted each year by the National Certification Body for Certifying Enterprises which adopt policies promoting gender equality in the workplace, under the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance. Until 2019, 54 companies in total were awarded a certification (among them nine have renewed their certification).

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

Policy Changes

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports promotes an antiracist policy, which is also supported by the Pedagogical Institute with teacher training related to antiracist policies and practices in education. Specifically, the Ministry, following a recommendation by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, and in collaboration with the Anti-Discrimination Body, has drafted a “Code of Conduct Against Racism & Guide for Managing and Reporting Racist Incidents” in schools. The Code discusses research and policy which identifies the need for a whole-school antiracist policy, with a broad conceptualisation of racism in all forms, in order to include all sorts of discrimination. It also provides schools and teachers with a detailed plan on how to deal with and prevent racist incidents, which they may adjust to their specific needs before they adopt it and begin its implementation. It includes definitions of basic concepts (e.g. racism, racist incident, homophobia, transphobia, bullying, discrimination, gender stereotypes, sexism etc.), outlines the responsibilities and commitments expected by each member of the school community and provides the steps to be followed by schools for dealing with racist incidents in a practical rubric.

Other activities

1. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports is focused on ensuring equal opportunities in education for both genders on a non-discriminatory basis at all levels of education. The Ministry has formed an Interdepartmental Committee with representatives from all the Ministry’s departments and services. This Committee oversees and co-ordinates all gender equality issues related to actions taken by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports.

2. There is also a website dedicated to Gender Equality (Pedagogical Institute), which includes useful information, bibliography, and teaching material for promoting equal opportunities of both genders and gender mainstreaming in the educational process. The content of the website is frequently updated.

http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=910&Itemid=383&lang=en

3. The recently revised curricula have developed modern educational materials which will include a gender perspective aimed at combating gender stereotypes from an early age, especially by encouraging boys' greater involvement in family life and women's participation in politics/public life and develop relationships based on gender equality and mutual respect between the sexes.
4. Implementing programmes in schools with the aim of promoting gender equality and respect among all children in class, irrespective of their background or gender (Educational Psychology Service).
5. Training of teachers and parents on issues related to active citizenship, multiculturalism, social inclusion/exclusion, identities and relationships between girls and boys, gender equality awareness through school-based training seminars and programmes (Pedagogical Institute).
6. Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute.
7. Organising conferences/seminars on gender issues for teachers of all levels by the Pedagogical Institute.
8. Workshops for teachers and students aiming at the promotion of equality and inclusion (Career Counselling and Educational Services).
9. Collaboration of the Interdepartmental Committee with the Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Training Committee and various NGOs.
10. In collaboration with the Interdepartmental Committee with the Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Training Committee is organising an annual competition for pupils at all levels of education concerning combating gender stereotypes in the field of workplace or their career path.

The Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Ombudsman)

Since last February, we address letters to all the Supervisors of Public Sector, requesting information about the measures they have taken to disseminate and implement the Code of Conduct to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the public sector.

Furthermore, in August, we made a recommendation to the Director of the Department Public Administration and Personnel to consider issuing a Circular to all Public Services calling on the relevant Supervisors to immediately give instructions to their staff to remove any photographs, pictures or any other material posted on public service sites that promote sexism and discrimination by portraying women as sexual objects. This recommendation is under implementation, as we were informed.

Also, a Report of the Ombudsman suggesting that fathers should be allowed into the delivery rooms during the birth of their children if they test negative for coronavirus. The report was submitted to the Health Minister who is the competent authority for issuing such instructions to public and private hospitals in order for them to abide by this recommendation.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training

"In 2020, the Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training has conducted a qualitative and quantitative survey through a private research organisation on gender stereotypes

discrimination in Cypriot labour market. This action derives from the National Action Plan for Equality between Men and Women 2019-2023 and aimed mainly through the analysis of both employers' and employees' attitude, to record the views, actual data as well as the detection of stereotypes, the stance of women in the Cypriot labour market given the recorded inequality that exists in various sectors. At the same time, it seeks to address and highlight the need for action at both the institutional and civil society levels to adopt practices aiming towards gender equality through the elimination of discrimination, combating negative traditional gender stereotypes and bridging the gap of employment and unemployment, reducing the pay gap, tackling gender inequality at workplace, gender segregation etc. The main findings of the survey will be presented at a press conference to be co-organised with the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurances.

Moreover, in 2020, a Painting Competition was successfully held by the Gender Equality Committee in collaboration with the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth) where students of Primary and Secondary Schools participated and best entries of each category were awarded. The purpose of this action is to inform and raise awareness of students and teachers, but also to tackle gender discrimination and stereotypes in regard to their future education and employment and form a new culture and attitude amongst youth. This competition has been running for nearly a decade and has been established on an annual basis.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

Legislative Changes

In national laws, general references are made to the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports for the provision of information on sexuality education to children and provision of training to educators. Sexuality Education is included in the Health Education curriculum as a thematic area frame "Family Planning – Sexual and Reproductive Health".

2.2 Policy changes.

Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance

The National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family 2017-2019 has been evaluated and the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family in co-operation with all the relevant Services and actors involved, is in the process for the development of the new National Action Plan.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

Policy Changes

1. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports recognising its responsibility and influence in the field of primary prevention, has proceeded to the setting up and operation of a Co-ordinating Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children with representatives of all Ministry's departments and services. The Committee co-ordinates all matters concerning the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse and Child Pornography relating to the actions of the Ministry.

2. The National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography ("NS") constitutes the basic policy text and guides the actions and initiatives of the Authorities of the Republic of Cyprus for the next three years. The elaboration of the NS was decided by the Council of Ministers on 13/7/2015 and for this purpose an Inter-ministerial Committee has been established, comprising the Ministers of Education and Culture, Labour, Welfare and Social Security, Justice and Public Order and Health. The National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Sexual

Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography 2016-2019, seeks to recognise the scope and scale of this social problem, to identify the priorities for addressing it properly and to determine the necessary actions and policies in order to achieve the primary goal which can be described as follows: “All children should have the opportunity to grow up in conditions of security, equipped with all the tools that would allow them to develop healthy relationships, without having to face any form of sexual exploitation or abuse, free from all forms of sexual injury”.

Other activities

1. In-service training of teachers on issues related to preventing and combating delinquency (Department of Primary Education, Department of Secondary General Education, Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, the Pedagogical Institute).
2. Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute and the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS).
3. Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute on gender relations topics.
4. Collaboration of the Interdepartmental Committee with various NGOs.

The Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Ombudsman)

Report of the Ombudsman on the investigation of the conditions of circumstances that led to the death of the underage St.K. The Report revealed inadequacies regarding the enforcement of the legislation for preventing and combating domestic violence by Officers of the Welfare Services and the Police.

2.3 Institutional changes

Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance

The Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family has been established since 1996

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Ombudsman)

Given that due to the pandemic, most of the training and seminars in the public sector were cancelled, our Office could not proceed with a series of systemic seminars for the dissemination of the Code of Conduct to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the public sector. Nevertheless, we are in consultation with the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration in order to make sure that the seminars, which are addressed both to civil officers and to trade union officials, are going to be started as soon as the COVID-19 protocols allow it.

Since last February, we address letters to all the Supervisors of Public Sector, requesting information about the measures they have taken to disseminate and implement the Code of Conduct to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the public sector.

Further in August we made a recommendation to the Director of the Department Public Administration and Personnel to consider issuing a Circular to all Public Services calling on the relevant Supervisors to immediately give instructions to their staff to remove any photographs, pictures or any other material posted on public service sites that promote sexism and discrimination by portraying women as sexual objects. This recommendation is under implementation, as we were informed.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance

In November 2020, the Women's House started its operation. The Women's House has been established in order to provide to women, victims of violence, and their families immediate access to services in a friendly environment. The services are provided under one roof based on a multidisciplinary/multiagency approach. The operation of the House was assigned to the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family, under the supervision and in co-operation of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training

The Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training continues to provide free Legal Aid under the provisions of Regulatory Administrative Acts 176/2009 upon request from applicants whose complaints' investigation by the Inspectors of the Department of Labour are considered as valid, should they wish to file a lawsuit in a Labour Court. The right to legal aid by the Committee is non-restrictive to any person in regard to their socio-economic status.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance

The Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance engages in activities contributing to raising public awareness on the gender pay gap and its detrimental consequences on women's economic and social life, such as the organisation of annual Equal Pay Day events. In 2020, the Ministry carried out a week-long radio campaign with the Delegation of the European Commission in Cyprus, aiming to raise public awareness on the issue of the pay gap between men and women. In addition, an information campaign took place by Inspectors of the Ministry, as part of the labour law inspections during the same week.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

Policy Changes

The Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance have been put under their guardianship a number of unaccompanied minors, applicants for international protection. Subsequently, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports of Cyprus is applying European directives and the action plan of the Interdepartmental Committee for the Integration of children with a migrant background, for the education of all underage persons, especially children with a migrant background, prepared a special program for the education of unaccompanied minors in schools. As part of their studies at school and during the asylum procedure, there is an effort to empower these children especially in education, technical training, work and employment, access to basic services and the active participation and social inclusion with a view to obtaining further educational and professional qualification. Unaccompanied minors are refugee children group have the highest vulnerability, due to both their recent traumatic experience having lived and the lack of support from their family in their place of arrival. Therefore, the Ministry of Education efforts focused on further support and integration of these children.

Also, in the Educational Programme for Unaccompanied Minors who are Applicants for International Protection a Certificate of Attendance was granted to children who would attend the particular programme and in addition the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports established three afternoon classes at the State Institutes of Further Education. Such classes ran on a full time schedule of 20 periods per week and were staffed with teachers employed through the purchase of services (the basic criterion for recruitment being experience and professional qualifications for teaching Greek as an additional language).

Other activities

Participation in a project co-funded by Asylum, Immigration and Integration Fund and Cyprus government (in co-operation with CARDET and Innovade) that offers Greek language lessons for third country minors as part of the measures to integrate asylum-seeking, refugee, and women and girls from migrant background into the education system (primary and secondary level).

5.3 Institutional changes

The Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Ombudsman)

Report of the Ombudsman regarding the measures taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus COVID-19 at the Reception and Accommodation Centres. The Ombudsman recommended, among others, that the special needs of vulnerable persons, such as unaccompanied minors and women, are being assessed and in accordance these persons are being removed in community.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Ombudsman)

Training on gender mainstreaming in public administration, which was planned to be implemented by our Office in co-operation with other stakeholders in 2020 was cancelled due to COVID pandemic. However, a seminar addressed to staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in highly positions has been planned to take place, with the active contribution of my Office, in the beginning of 2021, in accordance with COVID-19 protocols.

8. Additional comments, if any

Ministry of Health

The right to health is the right to physical and psychosocial care. The Cyprus Ministry of Health safeguards these right, offering equal access to all people, through health promotion, prevention and health protection programmes and the creation of a healthy environment,

The introduction of the law on “Ensuring and protecting patients’ rights” in 2004, which provides mechanisms to monitor the implementation of Health rights, created the appropriate supportive environment, as well as the provision of health services for all people regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender or any other difference and ensured also equal access to all health services and public health.

Regarding women, equality is guaranteed in the professional sector (health professionals: wage and employment rates), and in regard to patients’ rights.

Women are considered as a vulnerable group and have some special needs; therefore, the Ministry of Health has developed a number of specialised programmes to meet those needs.

All women in Cyprus, regardless their economic or social background are offered scientifically accurate information about reproductive health matters and services through the National Health System.

Highly educated Health Professionals give non biased information. The National Health System safeguards universal accessibility to health service provision based on Health and Safety standards, accurate equipment, and technologies.

In recent years significant progress has been made regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care in Cyprus. This has become possible through the implementation of targeted interventions on the basis of the declarations and guidelines of international organisations as well as the recommendations of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Moreover, processes have been recently launched with the participation of stakeholders to define new objectives through updating the National Strategic plan. Given that Cyprus is a small country with limited resources, all HIV care and treatment is provided in the Gregorios Clinic in Larnaca, which meets the particular needs of people living with HIV for the provision of specialised and high-quality health services. Notable is that medical care is provided free of charge by the government, while recently the cabinet has approved the provision of financial support to all HIV positive people. Prenatal transmission is kept at extremely low levels. This is due partly to the low prevalence of HIV infection in women, and partly to the measures taken for the prevention of prenatal transmission of the virus in isolated cases of pregnant women who are found to be positive. All pregnant women are offered testing and counselling for HIV and all seropositive pregnant women are provided to free regimens and advice to prevent the transmission of the virus to their babies.

A) Regarding Women in Childbearing years: At Family Planning and Maternity Centres, health visitors offer counselling services on reproductive and maternity issues. They also organise lectures on health education, nutrition, and healthy lifestyle in order to prepare young women for a healthy pregnancy.

B) Women in Pregnancy: During Pregnancy, young mothers are regularly examined by gynaecologists and midwives. These examinations ensure mothers' physical condition and include weight control, ABO grouping, glucose challenge test, urine examination and Foetus ultrasound regularly in the frame of a Foetal anomaly screening programme.

Post-partum: Breast feeding Promotion, rooming in, Health visitors house visits
(National Strategy on promotion and support of breast feeding in Cyprus)

Safe abortion services (surgical/non-surgical) are also offered in the frame of the National Health System.

Regarding Cancer Prevention there is a National mammography screening in place for women between 50-69 , since 2004, and for cervical cancer screening women are entitled to undergo a Pap smear every two years (starting two years after their first sexual experience) until 60 in the frame of the NHS.

Female Genital Mutilation represents a violation of human rights. It influences health, physical integrity, and the psychosocial status of women.

In order to eliminate this cultural and social phenomenon that has a harmful effect on women's security and National integrity, the Ministry of Health supports all international efforts and collaborates with UN and international organisations.

In recent years, a series of measures have been taken in order to raise awareness on Female Genital Mutilation among Health Professionals.

A two-day workshop on violence for different groups of health professionals was organised by the Ministry of Health and experts from the WHO facilitated the discussions on female genital mutilation.

Additionally, in co-operation with the Cyprus Medical Association the Ministry has organised lectures in order to educate physicians how to recognise and handle with victims of genital mutilation.

As a monitoring tool, a reporting system of mutilation cases is about to be introduced in every Hospital of the country.

Additionally, gynaecologists and other related health professionals received a special train on how to deal with mutilated women and the critical mass of those women receives health care services from these trained professionals.

Experiences of Crisis

The recent Coronavirus crisis and the consecutive lock down, had, as a result, interfamilial violence issues. Although statistical data are not available to be published yet, it seems that girls and women of socio economically vulnerable groups were the victims at most.

The MOH during the pandemic with co-operation with the “Foni” National Strategy Implementation Council and the Police, has offered a telephonic help line for children and adolescents who experienced violence related issues.

The main challenge was the lock down itself. Due to the lack of socialising, a lot of issues occurred behind locked doors and it has been a brand-new situation for everybody.

Fortunately, all stakeholders have worked together and the mass media played an important role in preventing and handling these cases.

The main lesson learned during the crisis is that synergistic /Intersectoral and holistic approach is the best practice to address the problem.

DENMARK

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Legislative bill on digital mail for both parents

A bill on digital mail for both parents is currently being introduced in parliament. The bill intends to contribute to greater equality between parents. The aim of the bill is to ensure that digital post about a child will be sent to both parents/custodians and not only to the mother as is currently most customary. This will include messages and information from schools, children's institutions, hospitals, doctors and dentists, etc.

1.2 Policy changes

Sexual harassment in the workplace

Denmark is currently experiencing a second wave of debate concerning sexual harassment in the workplace. What started as an outcry from women in media has spread to many other lines of industries. The Danish government has recently launched 14 concrete initiatives to support the necessary cultural change at Danish workplaces and in the educational sector, regarding both prevention and handling of sexual harassment. The implementation has started and some of the initiatives will be implemented the end of the year."

The level of sexual harassment compensation will be evaluated

In connection with the amendment of the Equal Treatment Act in December 2018, the parliament decided to increase the average level of compensation for sexual harassment by one third to approx. 33,000 kr. In early 2021, the level of sexual harassment compensation will be evaluated.

Maternity schemes for the self-employed

In the fall of 2020, the Government presented a new maternity scheme for self-employed. Thus, the self-employed will be covered on the same terms as private employers. This means that self-employed people in addition to parental leave benefits in the future can receive compensation from the scheme when they take parental leave and thus have greater financial security to, for example, cover fixed expenses in their company while they are on leave. The amount is calculated based on how much the individual self-employed earn.

1.3 Institutional changes

Sexual harassment in the workplace

In order to combat sexual harassment at the workplace the Government have presented 14 initiatives to prevent and combat sexual harassment. Among other things, the Government invites the social partners to discuss ways to create a change of culture at the Danish workplaces, prevent sexual harassment and ensure that sexual harassment cases are consistently handled.

1.4 Research and awareness raising.

Digital harassment

In 2020, the Minister for Equal Opportunities launched a campaign on digital violence and harassment among young people, where young women are disproportionately affected by online harassment. With the use of films, social media and influencers the campaign focused on what is illegal online including online threats, hacking, fake dating profiles, online indecent exposure, non-consensual sharing of private images and pornographic image manipulation. The campaign targeted primarily young people in upper secondary education.

Parental leave

Since 2017, the campaign "Leave - take it as a man" has focused on promoting a more equal distribution of leave between men and women by creating debate and reflection in families and in the workplace. In addition, the campaign aims to inform about rights and opportunities in connection

to parental leave. In 2021, the campaign will be relaunched together with stakeholders from the labour market with an increased focus on creating a cultural change in the workplace, which supports a more equal distribution of leave between fathers and mothers.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Campaign on digital violence and harassment:

In 2020, the Minister for Equal Opportunities ran a campaign on digital violence and harassment among young people, especially amongst young women, who are disproportionately affected by gender-based harassment online. With the use of films, social media and influencers the campaign focused on what is illegal online including online threats, hacking, fake dating profiles, online indecent exposure, un-consensual sharing of private images and pornographic image manipulation. The campaign targeted primarily young people in upper secondary education.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The government has proposed a change to the criminal code defining rape as intercourse without consent.

2.2 Policy changes

Strengthened outpatient counselling in 2020

With the government's Finance Act of 2020, permanent economic support is allocated to Mødrehjælpen's project 'Out of the shadow of violence' and Danner's project 'Tell someone', which provides outpatient counselling services to victims of violence and their relatives. Permanent financial operating support was also provided to Dialog mod Vold's treatment scheme for perpetrators of violence. In addition, a pool was established to disseminate outpatient services. Project Q-network and Danner (Tell someone) have received funding from the pool.

Strengthened efforts as a result of COVID-19

In April, the Parliament allocated an additional 15 million DKK in 2020 in order to strengthen efforts in the area of violence under COVID-19, which was distributed respectively with 5.1 mill. DKK to Mødrehjælpen, 4.8 mill. DKK to Dialog Mod Vold, 2.1 mill. to Danner and 3 million DKK to the Men's Centre. The funds are to be used to increase the capacity of the outpatient treatment services for abused people and perpetrators, as well as for counselling and temporary emergency places under the auspices of the Men's Centre targeted at men who have been exposed to violence in close relationships.

Counselling service on dating violence

The Minister for Gender Equality launched in November 2019 a counselling service for young people age 16-24 who are victims of dating violence. The service provides individual and group-based psychological counselling for victims to relief the consequences of dating violence and help break the cycle. The service also trained professionals in two counselling services for young people so they can screen their target groups for dating violence and refer victims to relevant help. The initiative will run until 2023.

2.3 Institutional changes

In 2020, the Parliament allocated funds for extending the work of the National Unit Against Intimate Partner Violence (Live Without Violence) until 2024. The unit was established in 2017 as a co-operation between five key CSOs dealing with victims and perpetrators of IPV. It provides counselling, research and professional expertise to support victims, treat perpetrators, raise public awareness and train professionals. In the years to come, the unit will develop a pilot project with psychological treatment for male victims of IPV and their children.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Information campaign on rape and consent

In the fall of 2020, the Government will propose a change to the criminal code defining rape as intercourse without consent.

The Minister for Gender Equality will launch an information campaign in December 2020 with the purpose to provide information on the new consent provision and the boundaries between legal and unlawful sexual conduct. The campaign will strengthen the public conversation about consent, prevent rape, refer to relevant help and encourage more victims to report.

Study of the “Manosphere”

As part of the Danish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers, a Nordic study has been conducted in 2020 about the online forums (the “Manosphere”), where young men gather to oppose equality and women's equal rights, and to incite hatred and violence against women and minorities. The study was launched at an international virtual event on 25 November and will be followed up by a conference in 2021.

Knowledge about LGBT persons exposed to intimate partner violence

In 2021, work will be initiated to uncover whether LGBT persons who are exposed to partner violence have special needs for help and support, and to build knowledge about how these needs can be met.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.5 Other pertinent developments

The Equal Treatment Act was amended in 2019, so it underlines that in order to specify the scope of sexual harassment a specific workplace culture cannot be used as an excuse for a toxic environment. In addition, the level of compensation for victims has been raised to DKK 33,000. Moreover, several campaigns has been launched with the aim of fostering respectful workplace environments.

On 26 February 2019, following the amendment of the Executive Order, the WEA – in close co-operation with the Danish Social Partners – also amended the WEA Guidelines on Offensive Acts including Harassment and Sexual Harassment. The Guidelines are aimed at employers and employees and offer general advice and guidance on how to prevent and handle harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace.

In November 2020, the Danish government launched 14 concrete initiatives to support the necessary cultural change at Danish workplaces and in the educational sector, regarding both prevention and handling of sexual harassment. The implementation has started and some of the initiatives will be implemented the end of the year.”

Amongst the initiatives is a ministerial letter to all institutions and companies, highlighting both the current legislation and the managerial responsibility to handle sexual harassment at the workplace.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes

In April 2019, The Minister for Equal Opportunities in co-operation with Copenhagen Business School and seven major recruitment agencies launched a code of conduct for recruitment agencies about diversity in management and boards. It consists of eight principles for diversity in recruitment including presenting clients with at least 33% female candidates, raising awareness about the effects of unconscious bias and reporting on their results annually. Copenhagen Business School monitors the development in companies that have signed up to the code of conduct. In November 2020, the data and results of the development was published.

The government is looking into strengthening the efforts to create greater diversity in decision-making. This will include exploring the design of the current legislation in order to promote a more equal gender balance in management.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Implementation of the research reserve: Inge Lehmann programme

In October 2020, an agreement has been reached on the implementation of the research reserve for 2021. Of the funds, DKK 110 million is allocated to strengthen the research talent programme Inge Lehmann, which aims to promote a more equal gender composition in the research environments.

Women in politics

In 2020 a guide for Danish political party organisations to promote diversity and women in politics is being developed. The purpose of the guide is to provide the Danish parties with inspiration, good advice, examples, and tools on how party organisations can work to promote and retain women in politics at local, regional and national level.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

Promotion of rights, openness, well-being and inclusion of LGBTI-persons

In August 2020, the Danish Government proposed bill with ten initiatives to improve LGBTI-rights in Denmark. The government will introduce bills that will e.g. strengthen the protection of LGBTI-persons when it comes to discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech and furthermore, and make it possible to change legal gender for minors under the age of 18 years.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Promotion of rights, openness, well-being and inclusion of LGBTI-persons

The Minister for Equal Opportunities has launched a study on the living conditions of LGBT-persons that is expected in the end of 2021. The minister has also launched a study on the living conditions of intersex persons, which is expected in the summer 2021. In January 2021, the minister will launch a campaign to promote openness and inclusion of LGBTI-persons at the labour market. The campaign is a corporation between the minister, labour market organisations, companies and LGBTI-organisations.

8. Additional comments, if any

Youth panel on gender equality

In January 2020, the Minister for Equal Opportunities launched a new youth-panel on gender equality that will run until March 2021. The purpose of the youth-panel is to engage young people in a broad conversation about gender equality challenges and solutions in Denmark and activate the debate to a broader scope of the young population. The panellists will also contribute with reflections on new and emerging challenges, opportunities and efforts in the field of gender equality from a youth perspective.

ESTONIA

1.1 Legislative changes

In order to encourage more fathers to share care responsibilities with mothers, and through this help to reduce gender stereotypes concerning caring roles, from July 2020, fathers have an individual right for **paternity leave and benefit for 30 days**. Before July, the paternity leave duration was 10 working days.

1.2 Policy changes

From November 2019 to June 2021, a 19-month project **“Glass Walls and Ceiling in the Estonian ICT Sector”** is implemented that concentrates on developing and piloting nudging methods to increase the share of women among ICT sector students and employees. In the first phase of the project, literature review and qualitative analysis were carried out to cast light on the situation in the ICT sector in education and on the labour market in order to develop nudges. The nudges that could aid in bringing more women to study and work in ICT are being tested in 2020. After testing the nudges, an implementation analysis will be carried out. The project is co-funded by the Estonian Research Council from the European Regional Development Fund and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

From November 2020, a new 18-month research project, co-funded by the Estonian Research Council from the European Regional Development Fund and the Ministry of Social Affairs, kicks off. The project **“Nudging to Support Stereotype-free Career Choices and Working Conditions”** takes off from the notion that gender segregated education and labour market hinder Estonian development and pose difficulties in the context of aging society and future of the work. The project aims to develop nudges that would help teachers and career advisers in supporting and promoting career choices that are free of gender stereotypes, and support employers in ensuring equal and fair working conditions and stereotype free recruitment and promotion. The effect of the nudges is tested by using randomised controlled trials and an implementation analysis which specifies the scalability of the measures is carried out.

EU Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) programme project **“Towards gender equality through increased capabilities for work-life balance” (WoBaCa)** is carried out by the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioners` Office in co-operation with the Estonian Business School, the Serbian Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the City of Heidelberg in Germany, from April 2020 to March 2022. The project aims to promote gender equality and contribute to increased capabilities for work-life balance for women and men. In the framework of the project, a series of innovative and interactive tools will be developed, tested through a behavioural science lens for their potential to increase equality by improving practical everyday skills, changing attitudes and reducing gender stereotypes, especially those related to sharing of care. An analysis will be carried out addressing the aspects that hinder the work-life balance or cause discrimination due to use of relevant rights and will address most poignant ones through a toolbox of short-films. The project relies on a behavioural sciences methodological framework and targets directly young people aged 18+ and private sector employees through randomised control trials of these videos` effect. To increase the impact of the video toolbox, a board game and its online application will be produced and made available for schools, businesses and general public. Guidelines for specific target groups (female and male caregivers, their colleagues, managements, local governments, schools, politicians and a general one in simple language) will be formulated and made available online and in all European languages.

Another REC programme project, **“Engaging employers and improving gender discrimination detection to ensure adequate protection for parents at work” (Parents at Work)**, carried out from September 2019 to August 2021, is implemented by the Estonian Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioners` Office in co-operation with equality bodies from Belgium, Bulgaria and Portugal. The main aim of the project is to raise awareness of and inform employers on pregnant/parent workers` rights and work-life balance measures, improve equality bodies`

investigative techniques in pregnancy/parenthood discrimination cases, and raise awareness of labour inspectorates on discrimination of pregnant/parent workers. By the end of 2020, all partners will have prepared evaluation reports on frameworks and norms to ensure equal treatment between men and women in the workplace and reports on possible new investigative techniques that may facilitate of finding evidence of gender discrimination in the workplace. Additionally, all partners will have developed a training material directed at labour inspectors. Each partner will also have developed a practical toolkit (consisting of five checklists and based on their respective national situation) for employers, and an e-learning material, offering employers a clear overview of the rights of their employees.

1.3 Institutional changes

At its September 2020 meeting, the **Gender Equality Council, an advisory body to the Government**, discussed an **analysis of gender-based and sexual harassment in higher education** in Estonia. The analysis was commissioned by the Federation of Estonian Student Union and first published in spring 2020. As a result of the discussion, the Council decided to establish a **temporary working group** that would bring together stakeholders (e.g. representatives of students, universities, ministries, trade unions) to further discuss possible measures, facilitate co-operation between stakeholders and agree on further steps necessary to tackle gender-based and sexual harassment in higher education. The working group will meet twice between December 2020 and February 2021 and will then report back to the Council.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The **5th International Conference on Men and Equal Opportunities (ICMEO)**¹¹ took place on 3 and 4 September as an online conference. It was organised by the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs, in co-operation with the Nordic Council of Ministers and the European Institute for Gender Equality. The conference sought to provide a space for furthering discussions and learning from each other's experiences on topics ranging from caring to toxic masculinities. In this framework, issues such as men's responsibility to care for oneself, care for others and care for the well-being and sustainability of societies, including the promotion of gender equality, were addressed. In connection with **responsibility to care for oneself**, panel discussion concentrated on challenges and solutions of preventing and countering gender-based cyber violence, online hate-speech and anti-gender/misogynistic online movements.

In workshops, primary and secondary prevention of gender- based violence, but also issues of men, masculinities and ageing were targeted both giving food for thought from research and inspiring action by introducing good and promising practices. Under the umbrella topic of **care for others**, panel discussion focused on state policies supporting active fatherhood and workshop presentations on active fathering and shared parenting challenges and practices. In addition, another workshop provided opportunities to get inspiration on men sharing the burden of professional care. When tackling the issues of **care for society**, the keynote speech informed participants about what vegan men can show us about care and panellists discussed about men's participation in caring for environmentally sustainable societies.

In the workshop, on the other hand, different practices of men promoting gender equality were introduced. Finally, another panel brought together different counterparts to discuss **state commitment to promote gender equality with and for men**. Recordings of all discussions and presentations, also the conference report with the Conference Rapporteur's **conclusions and recommendations**, and a **briefing paper on challenges and opportunities concerning men and gender equality**, are available at the homepage of the conference. The briefing paper looks into issues such as benefits of and obstacles to involving men and boys in gender equality, factors encouraging men to promote gender equality and so-called sites for action for men as agents, among them early

¹¹ 5th ICMEO homepage is available at: <https://www.sm.ee/et/uritused/5th-international-conference-men-and-equal-opportunities-men-who-care>

childhood, schools, fatherhood and care, environment, anti-violence initiatives, organisations and workplaces; and finally, mobilising men.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Starting from 2019, the **Victim Support Act** is undergoing a renewal process. In 2020, initial draft law was sent for consultation and opinions to all relevant ministries, NGOs and other relevant parties, and discussions on the structure and content of the new law have taken place throughout the year. The draft is expected to be finalised in 2021. The new law will cover all the services and compensations provided by the national victim support via the Social Insurance Board.

2.2 Policy changes

Due to the spread of **COVID-19** virus, many activities in 2020 concentrated on providing support in difficult and unusual situation. To guarantee that all victims of domestic violence receive help, mapping of extra options for women's shelters accommodation through local governments took place. Customised women's support centre guidelines were developed for working during the state of emergency and for providing help and shelter for women in need of help (by the state). Encouraging messages were sent through the media about available help services (victim support, 24/7 crisis helpline, women's support centres and shelters), and mapping of volunteers for involving them in case of need for service provision was carried out. Some women's support centres started practising and communicating more via web solutions and chat options, as a possibility to provide help in cases where a person cannot make a phone call. In addition, some women's centres organised virtual support group meetings for victims of violence. It gave an opportunity to discuss coping strategies and share emotions during lockdown situation. Guidelines for women's support centre (also shelter) workers who are in higher risk because of their health conditions or age were also developed and instructions to work from home and with telecommunication and online options were given. Personal protection equipment and disinfectants for women's support centre workers, and Health Board guidelines to print and share in women shelters and among workers, were provided. Regular web briefings, co-ordinated from the state level, with women's support centres all over Estonia took place to share good practises and solutions.

Otherwise, the work continued according to the **Government Action Plan to Prevent Violence in Close relationship 2019-2023**. The aim of the work is to provide a co-ordinated and integrated response to domestic violence by focusing on both victims and perpetrators and to ensure victim's security and empowerment, rapid intervention and case management, and effective need-based social and psychological support. Based on the results of the pilot project carried out in 2017-2018, a new intervention approach was agreed by the Government. The budget of victim support was risen considerably.

The new intervention approach combined with **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**¹² that started in 2019 continued also in 2020 and was expanded to all 15 counties all over Estonia, with 19 MARAC teams all together. Co-operation seminars and training were organised in 2020 with an emphasis on the exchange of knowledge and experience of best practices in working with victims of gender-based violence. Extra focus has been put on high-risk cases.

In 2020, also development of a new **training material for local government specialists**, both child protection workers and social workers started. It will include both written material and short video clips in order to reach as wide audience as possible. Closer co-operation with local governments regarding tackling domestic violence is foreseen for 2021.

Also, special **two-day training on domestic violence and human trafficking** issues were organised for specialists working with child protection and in the National Victim Support unit of the Social

¹² MARAC is a victim focused information sharing and risk management, with meetings attended by all relevant agencies.

Insurance Board. Specialists in all four Estonian regions (North, South, East and West) were trained in October and November 2020. See also information provided under *Combating prostitution and trafficking in human beings*.

In addition, **training was also provided for criminal probation officers** in all four regions on how to co-operate with victim support service providers and with victims of domestic violence; wider institutional co-operation was discussed as well. The training was initiated by the Ministry of Justice and carried out in co-operation with different other ministries, the police and the Social Insurance Board.

Combating prostitution and trafficking in human beings

The **guideline on how to identify victims and to guarantee their arrival to social services and shelter**, finalised in 2019, was introduced in different working groups and via training. Joint **training** was organised in all four regions in Estonia in October-November 2020 for child protection specialists and victim support personnel to introduce the guide and promote co-operation between two groups of specialists. The reasons and consequences of human trafficking and its relations to domestic violence and gender-based violence in general were introduced, as well as practical guidelines on how to work with victims of trafficking.

Estonia participates in the international **project FLOW** (2018-2020). The FLOW project promotes a holistic approach to the prevention and investigation of trafficking in human beings (THB) in conjunction with economic crime and engages businesses in the prevention of THB. The tools developed in the project will be tailored for the four project countries, Finland, Bulgaria, Estonia and Latvia but can also be used in other member states with minor adjustments. Further information about the project can be found at its webpage.¹³

2.4 Research and awareness raising

During the state of emergency in spring 2020, the number of people seeking help from victim support helpline 116 006 due to domestic violence decreased by almost 40%. As the health crisis and related restrictions have reduced access to help for many victims of violence, it is important that people close to the victim, including relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbours and other witnesses/bystanders who are aware of the violent relationship would contribute to ending the violence. In May 2020, the national Social Insurance Board launched an **information campaign¹⁴ across Estonia, aiming to invite bystanders to notice, to ask advice from the helpline and help victims of domestic- and gender-based violence**. The campaign was organised pro bono by marketing agency Havas Creative and media agency Havas Media in co-operation with the victim support team of the national Social Insurance Board.

In addition, in November 2020, the national Social Insurance Board launched an **outdoor and social media information campaign "What kind of male-character do you want to be?"**, aimed at **inviting men to pay attention to their behaviour and how their behaviour affects their loved ones**. On the one hand, the message of the campaign is that everyone always has an opportunity and power to decide how to behave. However, as changing behaviour is not always easy, support for that can be found. The campaign introduces one support option which is a **non-violence helpline 660 6077** opened in May 2020 and operated by the Social Insurance Board. Through the helpline, a case-based advice and support to people who are worried about their aggressive behaviour is provided with an aim to find a suitable way towards non-violent future.

¹³ The FLOW project webpage is available at: https://www.heuni.fi/en/index/researchareas/humantrafficking/flow_thb.html

¹⁴ See the Social Insurance Board's press release in English at: <https://www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/en/news/victim-support-helpline-loved-ones-and-neighbours-who-remain-silent-aggravate-continuation>

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2019-2020, the think tank Praxis is implementing a project **“Nudging Women to Power”**,¹⁵ financed from the European Commissions` Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, with a co-financing from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the National Foundation of Civil Society and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The general objective of the project is to improve women’s access to high-level political decision-making. It aims to increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the importance of gender equality in public policy making and how the media as well as political organisations can help to empower women in achieving higher positions as well as visibility and credibility in public domains. In 2019, the main activities in the project focused on the research leading up to organising interactive seminars and designing online behavioural toolkits. A literature review on women’s participation in politics in Estonia and Europe and media coverage of female politicians, and policy review that gives an overview of the relevant policies, regulatory and institutional frameworks on national and international level, including the Council of Europe, were compiled and published. In addition, individual and group interviews with politicians and journalists were conducted and media analysis of the Estonian 2019 parliamentary elections campaign was prepared. At the beginning of 2020, a kick-off conference was organised with foreign speakers. The conference enjoyed wide interest from Estonian media and audiences. Workshops with politicians and journalists were held in autumn 2020. Online conference was organised on 18 November 2020 to draw attention to the role of media and the main recommendations from the project, and to support continuation of the discussions. In addition, an online toolkit for women already in politics or wishing to enter politics, and for the media, was launched¹⁶ and media analysis was published. Before the end of 2020, also a synthesis report will be published.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.5 Other pertinent developments

From May 2019 to March 2022, the national Social Insurance Board is implementing a project CIMISM (*Common Integrational Methods to Enhance and Implement Supportive Measures of Social Field in Estonia*). One of the aims of this project is **to provide knowledge to and empower Estonian regional networks of specialists** whose work includes helping migrants (e.g. local level policymakers and -implementers, child protection and victim support specialists, police, psychologists, medical personnel, teachers and other educational specialist), **to be able to support and help women and girls with different cultural backgrounds**. For that, creating awareness, understanding and safe tackling methods for example in cases of (a threat of) FGM, forced marriages and so-called honour-based crimes is needed. The project is co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Ministry of the Interior of Estonia. In December 2020, a two-day seminar will be held for stakeholders in order to introduce those practices from different angles, how to work in such cases from different perspectives. Speakers from the Norwegian national expert team who work with cases of negative social control will share their experience.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In May 2020, the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Competence Centre for the use of the Cohesion Policy Funding (Competence Centre) conducted an **analysis focusing on educational projects co-financed from the EU Structural Funds in order to determine whether the projects promote gender equality**. The analysis focused on whether and how the planning and

¹⁵ The project information is available in Estonian at: <http://www.praxis.ee/tood/naised-poliitikas/>

¹⁶ Available in Estonian at: <https://naisedpoliitikas.ee/>

implementation of project activities is guided by the aspect of promoting gender equality and which activities have been carried out to promote gender equality. The analysis includes recommendations to the policy-makers, the heads of implementing agencies and experts, and project promoters, on how taking into account the gender equality principle could be made more effective in the case of educational projects financed from the Structural Funds.

By the end of 2020, the Competence Centre will be completing a **communication project for gathering and disseminating best practices for promoting equal opportunities in the context of different projects and programmes co-financed from the structural funds in the period of 2014-2020**. The aim is to promote mainstreaming gender equality and equal opportunities in implementation of projects. Collection of best practices as well as three video clips will be available for dissemination in January 2021.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

A factor positively influencing the implementation of policies to tackle gender-based violence, is the existence of **specialised and active networks**. Even though a general anti-violence strategy and network exists, for domestic violence and human trafficking there are additional separate networks dealing very closely with policy and service development. The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for co-ordinating the domestic violence experts' network and the Ministry of Justice for anti-trafficking network. Experts communicate daily, tasks are very concretely marked and results measured. We consider this to be a good approach to ensure close a co-operation between relevant counterparts and to prevent that necessary actions would be overlooked.

FINLAND

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The Ministry of Justice has started to prepare a change in the criminal code so that gender will be added among the motives that constitute grounds for increasing the punishment of (any) crime as specified in chapter 6, section 5 of the Penal Code. The government proposal is due to be given to the Parliament at end of the year 2020.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

1. In 2019 the Ministry of Justice appointed a working group to prepare an overall reform of sexual offences. Its aim is to amend the Criminal Code of Finland, so the definition of rape is based on lack of consent. The reform work also assesses the provision concerning sexual harassment and the possible need for its reform. The report of the working group was finalised and sent for comments to different authorities and the civil society during the summer of 2020. The legislative work is ongoing.
2. The Ministry of Justice appointed a working group in March 2020 to assess ways to enhance the effectiveness of restraining orders. The working group is tasked with broadly assessing the range of ways available to improve the effectiveness of restraining orders, reduce the incidence of violations of restraining orders and improve the safety of victims of intimate partner violence in particular. The appointment of the working group is based on the Government Programme entry stating that the legislation concerning a restraining order will be reformed to better protect the rights of the victim.
3. Several researches have shown that women and especially women belonging to the minority groups are in a particularly vulnerable position as it comes to hate speech (online). The Ministry of Justice has started to prepare a change in the criminal code so that gender will be added among the motives that constitute grounds for increasing the punishment of (any) crime as specified in chapter 6, section 5 of the Penal Code. The government proposal is due to be given to the Parliament at end of the year 2020.
4. During 2020 the Ministry of Justice is assessing the possible need for specific regulation concerning forced marriages.

2.2 Policy changes

1. A new action plan (2020-2023) for combating violence against women was published in October 2020. It is one of the objectives laid down in the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government. The Action Plan covers honour-related violence and digital violence. In addition, emphasis is placed on the work to be carried out with perpetrators of violence and on the competence development of authorities responsible for criminal investigation, criminal procedure and criminal sanctions.
2. The Government Programme includes various measures to directly improve the status of victims of trafficking in human beings (THB), establish a police team for detecting and investigating THB offences, enact an act on assistance to victims of THB for local authorities, and amend legislation so that it will no longer be so closely connected to the criminal procedure, alongside with provisions on safe and supported housing services for victims of THB.

In order to carry out the above-mentioned measures, the Government has appointed a joint government co-ordinator against THB, Anti-Trafficking co-ordinator, who co-ordinates an inter-

administrative working group set by the Ministry of Justice. The aim of the group is to draw up and follow the Action Plan against THB, which is to be published in early 2021. Gender is one of the transversal scopes through which the actions are planned, especially in terms of victim recognition and assistance.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.5 Other pertinent developments

The State financing channelled to victim support services by the Ministry of Justice has increased since 2016, when the Act on Victim Surcharges came into force. In 2020, the Ministry of Justice granted 4,105,000€ in State aid to Victim Support Finland (VSF) for providing general support services for victims in accordance to what is required in the Victims' Rights Directive. VSF can help victims even in applying for a restraining order, in compensation cases and in acquiring an attorney. The funding of Nollalinja, a 24/7 helpline required in the Istanbul Convention and opened in Dec 2016, amounted in 2020 to 725,000€. The great majority of the clients of these services are female. With the use of the interpretation service, help is available even in many other languages than Finnish, Swedish and English.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes

Publicly listed companies: The Finnish Government has promoted gender balance on boards of publicly listed companies in accordance with the Government Resolution of 2015. The goal is that both genders have a representation of at least 40% on the Boards of large and medium-sized publicly listed companies. The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality (2020-2023), adopted in June 2020 continues to promote this goal. The aim is to achieve equal representation in accordance with the recommendations of the Finnish Corporate Governance Code formulated by the Securities Market Association and through listed companies' own actions. Listed companies are expected to decide their own objectives and actions as well as to report on their progress. The Government monitors progress towards this goal and evaluates its effectiveness and the need for other measures on an annual basis. In 2020, the proportion of women on the boards of publicly listed companies is 30% on average. On the boards of the large cap, mid cap and small cap listed companies the proportion of women is 34%, 30% and 26% respectively.

State-owned companies: Since 2004, the Government Action Plans for Gender Equality have included equality goals for State-owned companies. As stated in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality (2020-2023), the Government will continue its systematic efforts to increase the percentage of women among members of boards and management groups in State-owned companies, based on goals set in 2004. Progress towards these goals and the gender equality goals defined in the Government Resolution on State-ownership Policy will be monitored on an annual basis in the Government's Annual reports to Parliament. The contents of these goals have changed little during the past years and are as follows:

- The boards of companies wholly owned by the State must have at least a 40% representation of both women and men.
- The 40% requirement also applies to companies in which the government has a majority holding and which are not listed companies, unless there are specific reasons preventing this (clauses in the articles of association, partnership agreements or other similar limitations).
- In companies where the government has a direct or indirect minority holding, the government and its representatives in the company must promote gender equality by nominating candidates for board members in a manner that is consistent with gender equality objectives.
- In all listed companies in which the government has a majority holding, the goal is to attain the minimum target of a 40% representation of women and men.
- The government will promote equal gender representation in corporate management groups and nomination committees.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Gender matters? Promoting equal gender representation in the media, politics and leadership positions: The aim of the project Gender Matters? (1 February 2019–31 January 2021) is to promote gender equality in the media, politics and in the corporate sector. The project has provided training for journalists and developed information concerning elections and decision-making. In addition, the project has promoted a more inclusive and intersectional understanding of gender. The project is divided into three sections that are interrelated to each other: 1) Gender matters in political decision-making, 2) Gender matters in the media, 3) Gender matters in leadership positions. Objectives of the project are as follows: raising awareness about the goals and benefits of balanced numeric participation and the equal substantive representation of all genders; raising awareness about the intertwined nature of inequalities in public debates, political decision-making and leadership; promoting a more inclusive and intersectional understanding of gender. In 2020, the project published a report *Gender Matters in the Finnish Parliament? Gender equality in the activities of parliamentary groups and committees* (<https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/139211>, with a summary in English). Partners of the project are: The Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle, The Union of Journalists in Finland, Women Journalists in Finland, The Institute for the Languages of Finland (Kotus). The project is funded by the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. For more information, see: <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/research-and-expertwork/projects-and-programmes/gender-matters-promoting-equal-gender-representation-in-the-media-politics-and-leadership-positions>

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.3 Institutional changes

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has taken an action to establish a co-ordination mission against honour-related violence in the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare from the beginning of 2021. The role of the co-ordinator is to build knowledge on honour-related violence and to work with all stakeholders and organisations to combat honour-related violence.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is funding a project of the Family Federation of Finland in which they compile existing multilingual material on sexual health, gender equality, self-determination, negative social control, etc. in their web-pages. They also provide short descriptions and training how the material could be used. Besides that, they developed training packages and training for professionals in various sectors.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is also funding ten projects implemented by NGOs, half of them immigrant organisations. The aim of the projects is to strengthen the social awareness of immigrants, especially in matters related to equality, sexuality, self-determination and harmful traditions.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

In the government programme (adopted in June 2019) there were several measures regarding gender mainstreaming. The measures are formulated further in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020–2023 (published in June 2020). The entire Government is responsible for promoting gender equality and the Action Plan includes measures in various areas of society. All the ministries participate in the implementation and follow-up of the measures. The main themes in the Action Plan are: Improving equality in working life and financial decision-making, Reconciling work and family life, and distributing care responsibilities more equitably, Promoting gender equality in early childhood education and in education, Reducing violence against women and intimate partner violence,

Improving the status of gender minorities, Promoting gender equality in major reforms and mainstreaming the gender perspective.

The measures to promote gender mainstreaming include promotion and development of GRB and GIA and the inclusion of gender aspects in other key processes in the ministries. The action plan also reassures the mutual learning and co-operation between the ministries and underlines the importance of the resources for GM work. The gender equality competences of the civil servants are enhanced by a digital gender mainstreaming training which was published in March 2020 and other training. The production of gender-analysed data and its use as an input for preparation and decision-making is promoted. As the exact information of the gendered effects of COVID-19 pandemic is fragmented and scarce, the government will conduct a broad-based study on the gender-specific social, financial and health impacts of the coronavirus crisis in the short and long term. All the line ministries will promote gender equality and incorporate the gender aspect in at least one of their key projects or activities during the governmental period.

6.4 Research and awareness

The first digital gender equality and gender mainstreaming training for civil servants was published in March 2020. It is available to all the civil servants in the country. Gender mainstreaming is included in the orientation training of the new employees in many ministries.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The Government Programme incorporates a record number of measures to promote gender equality. These constituted the foundation for the preparation of the Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020–2023. A cross cutting theme is intersectionality: The action plan focuses not only on gender but also on socioeconomic status, age and ethnic background.

FRANCE

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme

1.1 Changements législatifs

Décret du 13 mars 2020 relatif au dispositif de signalement des actes de violence, de discrimination, de harcèlement et d'agissements sexistes dans la fonction publique prévoit une procédure de recueil des signalements effectués par les agents ainsi qu'une procédure d'orientation vers les services et professionnels compétents chargés de leur accompagnement et de leur soutien.

Loi n° 2020-766 du 24 juin 2020 visant à lutter contre les contenus haineux sur Internet : création d'un parquet spécialisé dans les messages de haine en ligne, simplification du signalement d'un contenu inapproprié, création d'un Observatoire de la haine en ligne, rattaché au Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel (CSA).

1.2 Changements dans les politiques publiques

28 novembre 2019 signature de la **5^{ème} Convention interministérielle pour l'égalité dans le système éducatif (2019-2024)** entre les ministres responsables de missions d'enseignement. Elle définit cinq axes d'intervention pour une approche intégrée de l'égalité autour de la formation du personnel, de la transmission aux jeunes d'une culture de l'égalité ou encore de la lutte contre les violences sexistes et sexuelles.

17 janvier 2020 signature d'un **Protocole d'engagement pour la prévention de l'exposition des mineurs aux contenus pornographiques en ligne** entre l'État, les fournisseurs d'accès à internet et les opérateurs.

21 juillet 2020, Publication du « **Guide de bonnes pratiques innovantes en matière d'égalité femmes-hommes dans les entreprises** » par le Conseil de la mixité et de l'égalité professionnelle dans l'industrie.

1.3 Changements institutionnels

Nomination le 6 juillet 2020 de Mme Élisabeth Moreno, Ministre déléguée, chargée de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, de la diversité et de l'égalité des chances dans le gouvernement de M. Jean Castex.

1.4 Recherche et sensibilisation

2 mars 2020 Publication du **deuxième rapport du Haut Conseil à l'Égalité (HCE)** sur l'état des lieux du sexisme en France.

6 mars 2020, Publication de l'Observatoire 2020 de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans la culture et la communication qui mesure la part des femmes dans l'administration, les institutions et les entreprises culturelles et médiatiques

26 mai 2020, Analyse par le Haut conseil pour l'égalité sur la perception des jeunes générations concernant la répartition des tâches domestiques durant le confinement.

9 septembre 2020, Remise du **rapport Calvez sur « la place des femmes dans les médias en temps de crise »** commandé par le Premier ministre et la Ministre déléguée à l'égalité, formulant 26 préconisations pour renforcer la représentativité des femmes dans les médias et la lutte contre les stéréotypes.

2. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 Changements législatifs

Loi n° 2019-1480 du 28 décembre 2019 visant à agir contre les violences au sein de la famille :

- fixe à six jours maximum le délai de délivrance par le juge aux affaires familiales d'une ordonnance de protection ;
- prévoit la mise en place d'une aide financière si la victime souhaite quitter son logement ;
- instaure le port d'un bracelet anti-rapprochement lorsqu'une interdiction de se rapprocher de la victime est prononcée ;
- élargit les conditions d'attribution d'un téléphone grave danger (TGD) à une victime.

Loi n° 2020-936 du 30 juillet 2020 visant à protéger les victimes de violences conjugales :

- consacre la notion d'emprise, qui permet au professionnel de santé de lever les réserves du secret médical ;
- réaffirme l'interdiction de la médiation familiale en cas de violences domestiques et alourdit la peine encourue en cas de harcèlement moral au sein du couple ;
- renforce les prérogatives et obligations du juge aux affaires familiales lorsqu'il est saisi d'une demande d'ordonnance de protection.

2.2 Changements dans les politiques publiques

« Grenelle des violences conjugales » : consultation nationale du 3 septembre au 25 novembre 2019. Cette mobilisation sans précédent a donné naissance au **Plan de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes** comportant 46 mesures en faveur de la prévention des violences, la protection et la prise en charge des victimes et de leurs enfants ainsi que la poursuite des auteurs.

2.3 Recherche et sensibilisation

Février 2020 Publication du **Guide pour le traitement juridictionnel des violences conjugales** qui trace le parcours « idéal » de traitement judiciaire d'un dossier de violences conjugales, du dépôt de la requête ou de la plainte à l'exécution des décisions.

2.4 Autres développements pertinents

Dispositifs de signalement des violences durant le confinement :

- nouveau canal d'alerte pendant la crise sanitaire, le 114, préalablement destiné aux personnes sourdes et malentendantes ;
- points d'information ouverts avec les associations locales, les services de l'État et les gestionnaires de centres commerciaux ;
- dispositif de signalement en pharmacie lancé avec l'appui de l'Ordre national des pharmaciens.

Mesures à destination des auteurs de violences conjugales :

- ligne d'écoute mise en œuvre depuis le 6 avril 2020 pour accompagner les auteurs des violences conjugales mise en œuvre ;
- création de 16 centres de prise en charge des auteurs de violences en métropole et en outre-mer.

Diplomatie féministe :

- campagne pour l'universalisation de la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique.

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.1 Changements législatifs

Les lois du 28 décembre 2019 et du 30 juillet 2020 précitées facilitent également l'accès des femmes à la justice par :

- la généralisation de la possibilité de dépôt de plainte à l'hôpital ;
- l'interdiction de la médiation pénale comme alternative aux poursuites en cas de violences conjugales ;
- l'assistance d'un avocat dès le dépôt de plainte et renforcement des formations pour l'accueil des victimes à l'attention des policiers et gendarmes.

3.2 Recherche et sensibilisation

Dispositif national de formation pour les magistrats déployé en 2020 : mise à disposition pour les praticiens du droit ces connaissances scientifiques pour appréhender le phénomène des violences domestiques.

Décembre 2019 élaboration d'un **kit destiné aux professionnels susceptibles d'intervenir auprès de femmes victimes de violences** avec les informations nécessaires sur les recours disponibles et les ordonnances de protection par la Mission interministérielle pour la protection des femmes contre les violences et la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains (MIPROF).

3.3 Autres développements pertinents

Les Centres d'information sur les droits des femmes et des familles (CIDFF) ont maintenu durant la période du confinement, à partir de mars 2020, des permanences dématérialisées d'information du public. L'assistance se fait depuis la fin du confinement tant en présentiel que de manière dématérialisée.

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.1 Changements législatifs

Loi n°2019-1461 du 27 décembre 2019 relative à l'engagement dans la vie locale et à la proximité de l'action publique : avant le 31 décembre 2021, les dispositions du code électoral relatives à l'élection des conseillers municipaux et des conseillers communautaires seront modifiées pour étendre l'égal accès des femmes et des hommes aux fonctions électives.

4.2 Changements institutionnels

Dans le cadre de l'accord relatif à l'égalité professionnelle entre les femmes et les hommes dans la fonction publique signé le 30 novembre 2018, la **circulaire du 30 novembre 2019** précise que chaque administration de l'État doit se doter, d'ici le 1er mars 2020, d'un réseau de référentes et référents Égalité, afin que l'ensemble des agents publics puissent saisir un référent Égalité de proximité, sans préjudice de la mise en place d'une mutualisation.

5. Objectif stratégique : protéger les droits des femmes et des filles migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile

5.1 changements dans les politiques publiques

A l'occasion de la Journée internationale de lutte contre les mutilations sexuelles féminines, le gouvernement a présenté, le 6 février 2020, un premier bilan de son plan de lutte contre l'excision. Lancé en juin 2019, ce plan d'une quinzaine de mesures a pour but de combattre une pratique qui, encore aujourd'hui, concerne des dizaines de milliers de femmes dans le monde, surtout en Afrique, mais aussi en France.

5.2 recherche et sensibilisation

L'Institut national des études démographiques (INED) a renouvelé l'enquête « Trajectoires et Origine » pour la période 2019-2020. Cette enquête analyse l'évolution depuis 2008, date de la précédente enquête, des chiffres sur la situation des immigrés à la fois sur le marché de l'emploi, mais aussi dans l'accès à l'éducation, au logement, aux loisirs, etc. Une attention particulière est donnée aux inégalités intersectionnelles de genre et d'origine. Le questionnaire de l'enquête, administré auprès de 26 500 répondants de juillet 2019 à octobre 2020, a pour objectif d'étudier les conditions de vie et les trajectoires des individus. L'ensemble de la population résidant en France métropolitaine est concernée.

6. Principaux défis ; leçons à retirer

Plusieurs facteurs jouent un rôle clé dans l'implantation des politiques et des mesures mentionnées précédemment.

Tout d'abord, un travail nécessaire de coordination entre les institutions locales, nationales et la société civile doit être mis en place. C'est dans une perspective globale intégrant ces différents acteurs que la lutte pour l'égalité femme-homme est la plus efficace.

Il est également essentiel de **former les différents acteurs** jouant un rôle dans ces mesures. Cette sensibilisation peut passer par des guides, des partages de bonnes pratiques ou des formations pour le personnel encadrant.

Enfin, une pratique efficace dans une égale représentation des femmes et des hommes dans les institutions passe par une **mise en place de quotas, différencié selon la taille de l'infrastructure, et des sanctions financières ou juridiques si ces politiques** ne sont pas mises en place.

GEORGIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The General Code of Ethics and Conduct in Public Entities was adopted on 20 April 2017 by a governmental decree N200. The Code of conduct prohibits hate speech and incorporates norms regulating sexual harassment, identification of sexual harassment and its prevention.

On 22 February 2019 Parliament of Georgia adopted a resolution on adoption of the Code of Ethics for the Members of Parliament in order to prevent and react to the use of hate speech by the State Officials/Politicians. Article 2 of the Code sets out on the level of principles that members of parliament shall treat everyone equally, despite differences in race, colour, religion or other grounds and prohibits the use of hate speech; while Article 3 establishes that when executing parliamentary powers, it is inadmissible for the member of parliament to insult a person, to use rude, sexist, discriminatory speeches, appeals and/or to carry out such actions, as well as to make any other use of hate speech.

1.2 Policy changes

Action Plan of the Government of Georgia on the Protection of Human Rights (2018-2020) was adopted on 17 April 2018 with the Governmental Decree N182. The Action Plan contains various activities to be implemented by government institutions for the prevention and fight against discrimination on various grounds. Respectively, the Action Plan emphasises the following issues: enhancing detection and effectiveness of criminal prosecution of hate crimes and of crimes committed on the grounds of discrimination; proactive public information and awareness raising on discrimination and hate crimes; removal of discriminatory statements from the Georgian legislation, etc.

The 2017-2021 Strategy and Action Plan of the Prosecutor's Office, which were adopted in 2017, identify strategic directions, goals, objectives, timelines and indicators for the purposes of effective application of criminal prosecution mechanisms and for the prevention of hate crimes. The fight against hate crimes was identified as one of the priorities of the Prosecutor's Office. The following goals have been established for planning and implementing adequate criminal policy and preventive actions: establishing common practice in dealing with hate crimes and crimes committed on the grounds of discrimination; specialisation and re-training of prosecutors; public awareness raising.

LEPL – Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (hereinafter – MIA Academy) permanently implements policies aiming at awareness raising of police officers, including on anti-discrimination policy, in order to ensure protection of human rights without discriminating on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic identity while performing their duties.

For the 28 October 2018 Presidential elections, the candidates and representatives elaborated the "Ethical Principles" for the candidates participating in elections promoting a culture of elections free of violence and hate speech. This was a totally new initiative which was facilitated by the Central Election Commission with the support of the government of Switzerland. Signatories of the document agreed to respect Georgian legislation, to act in line with the principles of democratic governance and protection of society's interests, to encourage peaceful campaign environment, to abstain from acts of violence and from calling to violence. It is also noted in the documents that the candidates and their representatives carry out their campaign without any discrimination based on ethnic, religious, gender or other affiliations, refuse to use hate speech, or statements containing xenophobic rhetoric or intimidation.

The HR NAP (2014-2016; 2016-2017 and 2018-2020) contains a section on GEWE addressing women's economic empowerment, to be achieved through business education and capacity development

support, including in agriculture and agro-business, increasing women's participation in agricultural co-operatives and ensuring their involvement in rural development. A specially designated working group under Commission on Gender Equality is also working on WEE issues. To promote employment of women and men, the Government of Georgia is implementing active labour market policy through state programme on training/retraining and qualification raising of jobseekers.

The programme is aimed at raising competitiveness of job seekers in demanded professions through education and training and ultimately supporting their employment. Women are prioritised for the enrolment in the programme.

Annexe XXX of the Association Agreement includes a list of EU directives, which the Georgian labour and employment legislation had to be aligned with. Relevant legislative amendments were elaborated and passed to the Labour Code of Georgia, the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, Law of Georgia on Public Service, and the Law of Georgia on Gender Equality on 19 February 2019.

The law of Georgia on Public Service was amended in 2017 obliging public entities to take measures to ensure equal treatment of persons employed and to include provisions prohibiting discrimination in internal rules and other documents and to ensure their enforcement.

The mandatory paid maternity leave is 183 days, increased from 126 since 2014. The Law on Public Service of Georgia further allows employees to take time off work for prenatal care, while the Labour Code prohibits termination of employment during maternity leave and considers terminating labour relations to be inadmissible during the period of maternity, new born adoption leave of absence, and childcare additional leave of absence after a female employee notifies the employer about her pregnancy.

In May 2019, championed by the GEC, the second package of amendments on the topic of sexual harassment passed, introducing a ban on sexual harassment in public spaces to the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia, with the MIA, through police, being the primary enforcing authority. Relevant amendments have also been adopted to the Labour Code and Law on Civil Services to prohibit workplace sexual harassment. The mandate of the PDO has been further expanded to handle sexual harassment complaints.

1.3 Institutional changes

In order to ensure effective implementation of the Code, an Ethics Council was set up, which *inter alia* shall monitor and review cases of use of hate speech. In case of violation of the code of conduct by the Member of Parliament, the Ethics Council is entitled to issue a letter of recommendation. At the same time for the purposes of transparency and accountability the Council prepares annual activity reports that are published on the webpage of the Parliament of Georgia.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Raising Awareness of the officials at the state agencies

The staff of the Ministry of Internal Affairs systematically undergoes training in different topics, including on discrimination, hate speech, crimes committed on the grounds of racial, ethnic and national hatred.

Since 2018 to date, up to 200 employees of the MIA including those on managerial positions underwent training on actions directed against discrimination, hate motivated crimes and hate speech.

Police training includes topics such as: prohibition of discrimination, its essence, main international instruments, direct and indirect discrimination, state's positive obligations, prohibition of discrimination and respective national legislation, the Law on "Elimination of All forms of

Discrimination”, prohibition of discrimination and its various grounds (race, colour, nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other grounds), investigation of facts of discrimination and hate motivated crimes and specificities of establishing hate as a motive of crime.

Discrimination module is a part of all basic training curricula at the MIA Academy. The module contains international and national anti-discrimination legislation. Over 6,500 policemen were trained.

Since 2018 to date, up to 200 employees of the MIA including those on managerial positions underwent training on actions directed against discrimination, hate motivated crimes and hate speech.

The Guidelines on Investigation of Crimes of Discrimination were developed in 2018. The Guidelines aim to assist relevant units in identification and proper investigation of respective crimes. A manual developed for investigators, contained instructions for interviewing/examining a possible victim, defendant and witness of crimes motivated by hatred and the specialisation of investigators was launched.

The MIA and the OSCE ODIHR signed a Memorandum of co-operation on 19 February 2019. According to the MoC, a special programme on Training against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) was introduced at the MIA. The training programme was developed with participation of the representatives of ODIHR, MIA, the Prosecutors’ Office, the Public Defender and non-governmental organisations. In the framework of co-operation, the OSCE experts conducted a Train the Trainers course for the employees of the MIA. Final preparatory works are underway to launch a cascade training for the MIA staff based on the above module in 2020, in which NGOs will also be engaged.

In co-operation with the Council of Europe, the employees of the MIA underwent a TOT on Fight against Discrimination, Hate Crime and Hate Speech in Georgia. The training module incorporates the concepts of discrimination and prejudice, definition of crimes committed on the grounds of bias, definition of the general standards of the European Convention on Human Rights, international practice concerning specific grounds of discrimination (including, discrimination on the ground of race and nationality). A cascade training will be launched based on the above training module in 2020.

The Prosecutors’ Office prioritises educational and awareness raising activities on crimes committed against vulnerable groups. Including meetings with representatives of the society, students and pupils. Ethnic Georgian, Azeri and Armenian population attended those meetings. The aim of the campaign was to raise public awareness on the issues of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, including crimes committed on the ground of racial discrimination.

In 2019, the Prosecutor’s Office joined the Georgian Government’s campaign against gender-based violence. Prosecutors organised 24 information meetings in various cities/towns of Georgia. The aim of the campaign was to raise public awareness on gender-based violence, discrimination, hate speech, and hate crimes, including crimes committed on the ground of racial discrimination and the actions carried out by the state.

Next to improving the quality of investigations and raising qualification of investigators, the Department of Human Rights Protection and Quality Monitoring of the MIA is actively engaged in the prevention of hate crime and hate speech and in awareness raising campaigns.

Since September 2018, in the framework of the Council of Europe project “Fight against discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Georgia”, the work has been underway on the improvement of mechanisms for collection/analysis of data on hate crimes. The Monitoring Department of the MIA, the Prosecutor’s Office and the judiciary equally participated in the project implementation. The project aims to establish a common mechanism for collection of data for the

MIA, the Prosecutor's Office and the Supreme Court. It is expected to substantially enhance registration as well as the quality of data on hate crimes.

Since the investigative mandate of the State Inspector Service entered into force on 1 November 2019, the 20 employees of the Investigative Department of the Service were trained on Effective Investigation of Hate Crimes.

As a result of the government reshuffle in July 2018, the penitentiary and probation systems were integrated into the Ministry of Justice. Subsequently, a new Special Penitentiary Service compliant with international standards was created. The aim of the reform was to introduce a system compatible with modern European and international standards of management and the introduction and strengthening of human rights-centred approaches. Since 2019, to ensure the elimination of discrimination and promotion of an environment of tolerance at the penitentiary establishments, the significant part of an orientation training for escort officers, provided at the LEPL Training Centre of Justice, has been dedicated to the issues of discrimination. Namely, the course curriculum contains a five to seven-hour module on "What is Discrimination". The training is adjusted to the specificities of the audience and tailored to their needs.

Public Awareness Raising

The Ministry of Justice, UNDP and the Norwegian Government organised a public lecture – "Human Rights Based Approaches and UN Sustainable Development Goals" for the senior level staff of the Ministry of Justice at the Kvareli Training Centre of Justice on 21-22 December 2019. The role of developing human rights-based approaches, anti-discrimination legislation and human rights policies and strategies in reaching UN sustainable development goals were discussed at the meeting.

Information on criminal prosecutions and convictions on crimes committed against representatives of minorities on the grounds of discrimination, including on the ground of racial discrimination, were regularly shared on the web-page and the Facebook Page of the Prosecutor's Office during 2017-2019, for ensuring proactive public outreach on hate crimes and raising public awareness.

The officers of the Department of Human Rights Protection and Quality Monitoring of the MIA participated in the informational meetings organised on the entire territory of Georgia in the scope of the "Equality Week". The importance of equality and legal mechanisms for fighting discrimination were discussed at the meetings (see Annexe 2).

Since its establishment the State Agency for Religious Issues has been actively working with Georgian society for promoting religious tolerance and strengthening social inclusion. During 2015-2016 the Agency carried out training on the "Secular State and Religious Neutrality". Total of 200 public servants from all over Georgia participated in the training.

The State Agency for Religious Issues actively co-operates with all religious organisations active in Georgia and promotes dialogue between them. Since the establishment of the Agency the International Day for Tolerance (16 November) is celebrated.

The State Agency for Religious Issues carried out a cycle of training sessions at the Universities of Georgia for enhancing religious tolerance and strengthening social inclusion in the Georgian society. The training was held in almost all higher education institutions in Tbilisi and in the regions. Over 1,000 students attended training. For raising public awareness on tolerance, equality and religious neutrality, the Agency organised training for the representatives of almost all TV, radio and print media. The training was held throughout 2018 in various cities of Georgia with participation of numerous media representatives.

In order to raise awareness of representatives of religious organisations (the clergy) on freedom of religion and human rights and freedoms, as well as for promoting and strengthening the culture of tolerance, the State Agency for Religious Issues carried out training throughout Georgia.

On the initiative of the State Agency for Religious Issues a regular conference - an Inter-Religious Dialogue for Peace has been organised in Georgia since 2016. Four such conferences have been held already. The next conference will be organised next year. The agency regularly issues publications on the topic of religious freedom.

One of the most important tasks of the Legal Aid Service is to raise legal awareness of its beneficiaries in order for them to better practice their right. For this purpose, the Service regularly holds consultations in various regions of Georgia. In 2019, the Legal Aid Service held 133 consultation meetings.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Self-Regulatory Standards for the Media

The legal framework for the media in terms of gender issues is defined by the Georgian Law on Broadcasting and the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters adopted by the Georgian National Communications Commission.

The Georgian Law on Broadcasting obliges Georgian Public Broadcasting “to reflect ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, age, and gender diversity in programmes”.¹⁷ According to the same law, broadcasting license holders shall avoid “broadcasting programmes containing apparent and direct threat to incite racial, ethnic, religious or other hatred and which are of a discriminatory nature or encourage violence towards any group”,¹⁸ as well as broadcasting programmes that are “intended to abuse or discriminate against any person or group on the basis of disability, ethnic origin, religion, opinion, age, gender, sexual orientation ... or any other feature or status”.¹⁹

The Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, adopted by the Georgian National Communications Commission, obliges broadcasters to abide by broadcasting principles and “accommodate interests of various social groups regardless of their political affiliation, cultural, ethnic, religious and regional backgrounds, language, age or gender”.²⁰ The guidelines for reporting crimes and antisocial behaviour require that broadcasters “not disclose the identity of victims of sexual abuse, unless victims give their consent and disclosure complies with the public interest.”²¹

Broadcasters shall be careful when making a decision to broadcast shocking images and shall make careful judgment about the use of offensive languages.²² The code lists factors that broadcasters should consider and take into account when deciding on portraying violence; these factors include “violence in daily life: domestic violence ... ; ... incidents where elderly, disabled people, women and children are the victims; [and] verbal and physical aggression”,²³ and “sexual or any other violence should not be condoned”.²⁴

Broadcasters shall refrain from publishing any material likely “to incite hatred or intolerance on the grounds of race, language, gender, religious convictions, political opinions, ethnic origin, geographic location, or social background”.²⁵ The Law of Georgia on Advertising states that advertisements must

¹⁷ *Law of Georgia on Broadcasting*, Article 16, content obligation “h”.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Article 56, paragraph 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, paragraph 3.

²⁰ *Code of Conduct for Broadcasters*, Article 3, paragraph 1.b.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Article 50, paragraph 5.

²² *Ibid.*, Article 56.

²³ *Ibid.*, paragraph 6.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, paragraph 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Article 31.

not encourage citizens towards “violence, aggression or chaos” or any other dangerous actions that can harm their health or security.²⁶

Access to Media and Information

Ensuring ethnic minorities’ access to media and information is one of the priorities of the Strategy and Action Plan for Civic Equality and Integration. Through the Public Broadcaster the news programme is aired in Georgian, Armenian and Azeri languages. Besides, in September 2017, a seven-language (Georgian, Abkhazian, Ossetian, Armenian, Azeri, English and Russian) web-portal - www.1tv.ge was launched under the umbrella of the Public Broadcaster. Through the web-portal the users are able to access information in their respective language. The state continues to financially support publication of Azeri-language newspaper (Gurjistan) and Armenian-language newspaper (Vrastan). The newspapers are distributed in the regions densely populated by ethnic minorities, as well as in penitentiary establishments.

Respective programmes are accessible to ethnic minorities in the penitentiary establishments as well. To date, there are 22 television channels broadcasting in minority languages available to the inmates. In addition, libraries of all penitentiary establishments are supplied with Armenian-language and Azeri-language newspapers once a month.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Among first signatory countries in 2014, Georgia signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) a year before the Convention entered into force. Three years later, in 2017, Georgia became the twenty-third country to ratify the Istanbul Convention. The Convention entered into force, as regards Georgia, on 1 September 2017. The Parliament of Georgia confirmed the country’s commitment to combating violence against women by endorsing the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and adopting a milestone legal framework aimed at harmonising the domestic legislation with the Istanbul Convention. The Ministry of Justice of Georgia has developed a package of relevant amendments to 25 legislative acts. From the legislative changes, amendments made to the Criminal Code on the liabilities for forced marriage, female genital mutilation, stalking and forced sterilisation shall be marked.

Sexual Harassment

The Parliament of Georgia unanimously approved a bill on sexual harassment in 2019. As a result, the Labour Code of Georgia now includes the definition of sexual harassment. In 2017, the Government of Georgia adopted the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, which foresees the responsibilities of civil servants to prevent and respond to workplace sexual harassment. In 2018, the Civil Service Bureau developed the amendments to the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, which support the establishment of a unified approach towards the enforcement of ethical obligations.

2.2 Policy changes

The **National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in Georgia 2014-2020** is a key policy document that promotes a human rights-based approach in all policy development and implementation, including considering the different needs of women and men in any given situation. The predominant aim of the strategy is to develop a systematic approach to the realisation of human rights by all citizens of Georgia, as well as the timely rendering of the duties related to these rights by state authorities. It is important to underline that the given strategy will soon expire, and work on the new 2021-2030 National Human Rights Strategy is already under way to be adopted by the Government and presented to the Parliament by the end of 2020.

²⁶ Law of Georgia on Advertising, Article 4, paragraph 11.

Of the 23 objectives of the acting strategy, two are dedicated to violence against women and domestic violence and the elimination of discrimination. Specifically, objective 12 “guarantee[s] the right to equality and the protection of the rights of minorities”, and objective 14 prescribes the “promotion of gender equality, protection of women’s rights and fight against domestic violence, as well as prevention of consequences resulting from such violence”.

The **Government Action Plan on Human Rights (2018-2020)** consists of 27 chapters, of which the following cover the rights of women and gender equality issues:

- Chapter 12 – Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
- Chapter 13 – The Fight against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- Chapter 14 – Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (1325)
- Chapter 15 – Establishment of the Equality Policy and Combating Discrimination
- Chapter 19 – The Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Government of Georgia took an important step forward by expanding the scope of the **National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims/Survivors (NAP on VAW/DV)**, which significantly broadens the obligations undertaken by Georgia, as well as ensures the protection of DV victims/survivors. Previous National Action Plans adopted in Georgia focused solely on domestic violence. The 2016-2017 and 2018-2020 NAPs on VAW/DV cover the issues of violence against women more broadly, including both domestic and sexual violence.

The **2016-2017 and 2018-2020 NAPs on VAW/DV** prescribe activities related to prevention, awareness raising, the establishment of a national referral mechanism, the establishment of a crisis centre, the expansion of a hotline and the establishment of a unified system for gender data collection, as well as bringing legislation and state policy documents into compliance with the international standards, creating a platform for co-operation with municipalities and enshrining the measures supporting the change in attitudes, social norms and behaviours towards domestic violence and violence against women.

2.3 Institutional changes

In line with international commitments, Georgia has strengthened its national institutional framework and created strong institutional mechanisms. At the national level, the machinery consists of three key bodies:

1. Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence at the Human Rights Council.
2. Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia.
3. Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender’s Office.

Since June 2017, with the establishment of the **Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (hereinafter the Inter-Agency Commission) in the executive branch, the institutional framework for gender equality has significantly improved. An inter-agency body represented at the deputy ministerial level located in the executive branch, the Commission was created in order to meet the requirements of Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention. The Commission carries out the duties of the national-level monitoring mechanism for the Istanbul Convention and is a co-ordinating body; thus, it observes the implementation of the issues covered by the Convention.

In 2019, the mandate of the Commission widened and now covers a broad range of gender equality issues, including violence against women and domestic violence, women’s economic empowerment, sexual harassment, disaggregated data collection, gender mainstreaming, early/child forced

marriages and other harmful practices, implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325 (2000) et al.) and so forth. It is responsible for the adoption, implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plans on Gender Equality, Violence against Women/Domestic Violence and the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). In addition to its work on substantive issues, the Commission is mandated to support the effective functioning of, and co-ordination between, the activities of respective state bodies in the field of gender equality, violence against women, domestic violence and women's empowerment. Its mandate also includes promoting gender "mainstreaming" within the executive government institutions; supporting the collection and analysis of "gender segregated" data; supporting the implementation of the international obligations of the Government of Georgia on gender equality, VAW/DV and WPS; and co-ordinating the activities of respective state bodies in the field of gender equality, violence against women, domestic violence and women's empowerment.

The Inter-Agency Commission is authorised to create a consultation group, launch thematic task forces and invite independent experts.²⁷ The consultation group can be established with the Inter-Agency Commission, the members of which can be the representatives of non-governmental (non-commercial) and international organisations that perform the work that falls within the scope of the Commission.²⁸

The participation of non-governmental organisations and other civil society institutions is envisioned in each task force and is considered to be an important component. The Inter-Agency Commission appealed to the non-governmental organisations with the request to participate and Commission currently holds a database of organisations interested in co-operating.

Currently there are nine thematic task forces established within the Inter-Agency Commission:

1. Violence against women and domestic violence.
2. Women's economic empowerment.
3. Early/child marriage and other harmful practices.
4. Mainstreaming of gender equality.
5. Collection of data on gender-based violence.
6. co-operation and co-ordination between the local and central government.
7. Reflection of gender aspects in budgetary programmes.
8. Implementation of the mechanisms for accountability and eradication of sexual harassment in the public sector.
9. Implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

In 2004, Parliamentary Decree No. 105/3 established the **Gender Equality Council (GEC)**. It became a standing body with the passage of the Gender Equality Law in 2010. In June 2017, the institutional framework for the GEC changed, and it became a permanent consultation body to the Parliament of Georgia that exists to ensure systematic and co-ordinated activity on gender issues. Given its placement within the Parliament, the Gender Equality Council remains uniquely poised to play an important role in monitoring legislative developments.

According to the Regulations of the Gender Equality Council of Parliament of Georgia, the primary functions of the GEC are as follows:²⁹ to support the Parliament of Georgia to define the state policy regarding the gender sphere; to analyse the legislation of Georgia and develop proposals for the elimination of gender inequalities; to provide a gender equality assessment of the draft legislative acts; to develop and plan measures to achieve gender equality and ensure the equal rights of men and women; to develop and establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the measures ensuring gender equality; to supervise the gender equality activities of the executive government; if necessary,

²⁷ Ibid., Article 3 and Article 5, paragraph "b".

²⁸ Ibid., Article 3, paragraph 1.

²⁹ The Regulations of the Gender Equality Council of Parliament of Georgia, Article 3.

to summon the representatives of the line ministries and state agencies to the Parliament and obtain the relevant information; to hear the reports of the Inter-Agency Commission; to request information and documents related to the investigation of gender equality issues; to consider the applications, documentation and other information concerning violations of gender equality and the provision of response and respective recommendations within the competencies; and to conduct oversight of the implementation of the National Action Plan on the Rights of Women and Gender Equality.

The **Public Defender** was the first state institution to establish a structural unit on gender equality issues. Under Article 3¹ of the Law on the Public Defender, the Public Defender of Georgia shall ensure the effective protection of persons from discrimination. In December 2018, as a result of the reorganisation of the Public Defender's Office, the unit is now known as the Gender Equality Department. Its mandate includes, inter alia, monitoring the protection of the right to gender equality, as well as examining individual complaints concerning violations on said rights and issuing relevant recommendations. It also engages in research, promotes gender equality issues in the activities of the Public Defender, raises public awareness on gender-related matters in Georgia and produces annual and issue-specific reports on women's rights.

Among the supporting mechanisms ensuring the protection and promotion of gender equality in Georgia is the **Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department** at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, established to strengthen the response to violence against women and domestic violence. The core functions of the Department are to monitor the process of investigation and administrative proceedings regarding the above-mentioned crimes; identify the gaps; and prepare and enforce measures to enhance law enforcement's role in fighting them. The Department also analyses the statistics related to the investigation process and related administrative procedures.

Sexual Harassment

Since the beginning of 2020, under the leadership of the Inter-Agency Commission, numerous state entities are working on setting their own sexual harassment response mechanisms. As a result, by the end of 2020, more than 10 state entities will have established universal mechanisms for sexual harassment.

So far, the Ministry of Defence is the only state entity with such mechanism established. The Disciplinary Charter for Military Forces of the Ministry of Defence was amended on 8 December 2018, and two articles regulating forms of sexual contact and sexual harassment issues were added to the document. The general inspection hotline is active for making reports of sexual harassment cases at the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry of Defence, in co-operation with UN Women, is currently working on the development of a protocol for the investigation of sexual harassment cases.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Campaigns and Programmes

Under the Istanbul Convention, the Government of Georgia took on the commitment to regularly promote and conduct awareness-raising campaigns and programmes to increase awareness and understanding among the general public on all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence and sexual harassment.

Every year, the Government of Georgia joins the world in commemorating the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, observed annually from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day.

The 2018 and 2019 campaigns were different in the sense that the Government took full ownership over the initiative to get the message across that combating violence against women is a top priority. The campaign was implemented in line with the National Communication Strategy and Action Plan on Ending VAW/DV developed and adopted in 2018 by the Inter-Agency Commission with the support

of UN Women and the European Union. The 2019 campaign was dedicated to building knowledge on sexual harassment as a form of violence, as the legislation on sexual harassment was newly adopted.

In 2018, various governmental agencies conducted as many as 50 thematic events within the framework of the campaign. While 13 different state agencies were engaged in marking the 16 Days of Activism, all campaign events were conducted under one overarching theme – that ending violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a national priority and that the Government of Georgia is committed to supporting victims and holding perpetrators accountable.

The range of events conducted by the Government of Georgia was focused on promoting zero tolerance for VAWG and increasing awareness of the laws and services available for the survivors. The events were held across different regions of Georgia and featured a social media campaign with special logos and hashtags – such as #GeorgiaAgainstVAW, #endingVAWisajointresponsibility, #GeorgiaCares and others – that were designed by the Government for this occasion. In addition, 30 local municipalities across the country joined the central government’s initiative via social media to popularise the services available for survivors and to promote zero tolerance around the issue.

In 2019, the Inter-Agency Commission joined the global 16 Days campaign for the second time. In September 2019, at a joint meeting of the Inter-Agency Commission, UN Women and the EU, sexual harassment was identified as the main topic for the 2019 campaign. The message, target groups and measures were agreed upon. In addition, the sexual harassment outline was developed and was used in the planning and implementation of the events. The main message of the campaign was “Sexual Harassment is a violation of human rights and is punishable by law”. The main hashtags used were #TheStateCares, #16daycampaign2019 and #EveryWomanHasAStory. Within the framework of the 2019 campaign, 22 state institutions implemented numerous activities across the country with the direct participation of more than 3,000 people. The Government of Georgia is currently leading the 2020 16-Day Activism as well under the slogan and hashtag #TogetherAgainstViolence, encouraging the society to be actively involved in prevention, reporting and revealing the violence cases.

The Prosecutor’s Office also joined both campaigns and organised 24 information-sharing meetings each year on VAW/DV with schoolteachers, students and their parents, public officers and the local community. The purpose of the campaigns were to raise public awareness on gender violence, discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, including crimes committed based on gender discrimination and measures taken by the State.

With the goal of expanding inter-agency knowledge of sexual harassment issues, the Inter-Agency Commission has conducted numerous activities since the adoption of the new legislation in 2019. For example, in September 2019 in partnership with UN Women and the European Union, the Commission conducted a three-day workshop on sexual harassment. The workshop brought together as many as 20 communication professionals from government agencies. The initiative had a twofold objective and aimed at strengthening the capacity of line agencies on the response to sexual harassment, as well as supporting the integration of sexual harassment issues into the Government’s prevention work on ending violence against women.

In 2019 and 2020, the Government of Georgia joined the Council of Europe’s Equality Week in Georgia from 15 to 22 November. This week was part of the **I Choose Equality** awareness-raising campaign and marked the International Day for Tolerance (16 November). The campaign aims to raise awareness about human rights and anti-discrimination policy and their importance for securing democracy, peace and prosperity in Georgian society, to increase tolerance through raising awareness about the importance of diversity and equality as well as by providing information on available redress mechanisms for the victims of discrimination.

The social campaign “Power to Trust” is implemented by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) all across the country with the aim of promoting the prevention of domestic violence and raising public awareness on the existing legal mechanisms, state services and other support available regarding

domestic violence. Information brochures are developed in five languages (Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, English and Russian), and information posters are placed in police departments. Within the framework of the campaign, MIA representatives speak to public school students on the topic of the fight against violence. Pupils received information on the various forms of violence and the mechanisms for prevention, as well as the services provided by the MIA.³⁰

In June 2019, the Ministry of Internal Affairs with UNFPA's support launched an information campaign titled "Do Not Take Childhood Away". The main purpose of the campaign is to eliminate child marriage, increase public awareness and ensure crime reporting to the police in a timely manner. The information campaign lasted for 18 days – symbolically for the age of 18 (the legal age for marriage). Various events, including meetings with the population of the region, local government representatives, schoolchildren and teachers, as well as with other stakeholders, were organised. Employees of the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department and local police representatives led these meetings. Additionally, patrol police and community police officers delivered information booklets to the population of Tbilisi and the regions. In this regard, the main challenge is the lack of public awareness, which caused the information campaign to be launched in the first place.³¹

In 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, the Government of Georgia assessed the increased risks for VAW/DV and launched a rigorous communication campaign on alternative methods of reporting VAW/DV even though a full lockdown was never imposed in the country. In order to rapidly respond to the increased risk of domestic violence amid the stay-at-home policy, the Inter-Agency Commission, in close co-operation with non-governmental and international organisations, developed a communication strategy on VAW/DV during the COVID-19 crisis. The strategy outlines key messages and priority actions of the governmental entities and NGOs to ensure that information on state-provided services is available for all. The campaign promoted the following key messages: "The Government of Georgia continues its strict policy against domestic violence during the COVID-19 crisis. Domestic violence victims and survivors are not alone. The Government stands ready to protect them and provide state-funded support services for all. Combating domestic violence is the joint responsibility of all of us."

Within the campaign, the countrywide SMS system was used to provide information to every citizen on alternative ways of reporting VAW/DV. Cellular SMS messages were being sent in ethnic minority languages (Armenian and Azerbaijani) as well. In addition, while most locations for large gatherings in the country closed during the COVID-19 crisis, pharmacies and grocery shops continued to remain open. These spots were identified as safe spaces for victims/survivors of DV to learn about alternative ways of reporting DV and to do so immediately. In co-operation with the Inter-Agency Commission and UNFPA, most of the pharmacy and grocery shops in the country displayed information posters on DV services, including in ethnic minority languages. Information on state services, alternative ways of reporting DV, police-protection mechanisms, instructions to download the 112 mobile app and calls for zero tolerance for DV were shared through TV and social media ads prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other members of the Inter-Agency Commission with the EU's support. Information on state-provided services for the survivors of VAW/DV was also posted in quarantine hotels where more than 23,000 Georgian citizens were temporarily housed upon returning to the country from abroad amid the pandemic.

The emergency hotline 112 under the Ministry of Internal Affairs continued to provide 24/7 free services for all. The mobile app has a chat mode and silent SOS button, which means that a potential victim could call the police by pushing the SOS button, even without dialling the phone number. The VAW/DV consultation hotline 116 006, run by the Agency for State Care, continued to provide legal, psychological and social consultations in eight languages: Georgian, Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani,

³⁰ See <https://police.ge/en/power-to-trust-/10412>.

³¹ See <https://police.ge/en/nu-tsaartmev-bavshvobas-shinagan-saqmeta-saministro-naadrevi-qortsinebis-tsinaaghmdg-sainformatsio-kampanias-itskebs/12819>.

English, Farsi, Russian and Turkish. The consultation hotline 1481, run by the Public Defender's Office, also continued to provide consultations on gender-based violence 24/7.

With the aim of delivering information to schoolteachers and principals, a regional knowledge-building campaign on human rights, gender equality and VAW/DV was launched in 2020 by the members of the Inter-Agency Commission, namely, by the Administration of the Government, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport and the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality. Working meetings with schoolteachers and principals from various regions of Georgia are taking place within the campaign. Similar meetings also regularly take place with youth from various regions of Georgia.

Research Supported by the Government

Among other small-, medium- and large-scale research studies, the reports discussed below have been conducted through partnerships between various national and international institutions.

Men, Women, and Gender Relations in Georgia: Public Perceptions and Attitudes was carried out by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and presents the results from a 2019 survey and qualitative research based on the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES). The report provides insights on how perceptions and behaviours have changed since 2013, when the first adaptation of IMAGES was implemented in Georgia. The research analysed attitudes and perceptions regarding gender equality from the societal, community, relationship and individual level. The research unveils lingering disparities in the social perceptions of gender roles in Georgia while showing that traditional gender stereotypes have become less common than they were seven years ago.

The **Report on Femicide Monitoring 2014-2018** by the Public Defender's Office and with the support of UN Women presented an analysis of 83 cases of gender-related killings, attempted killings and suicide. The report highlights the main trends of justice policy, achievements and challenges in regard to the violence against women between 2014 and 2018.

The **2017 National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia**, conducted by UN Women, constitutes the first nationwide research study on violence against women conducted in Georgia since 2009 and explores the prevalence of domestic violence and non-partner physical and sexual violence, as well as the perceptions and awareness of women and men on gender and violence in Georgia. For the first time in the country, the study also generated data on the prevalence of sexual harassment and stalking at the national level.

In 2017, in order to support evidence-based gender policymaking and upon the initiative of the Gender Equality Council, the comprehensive survey "**Gender Equality in Georgia: Barriers and Recommendations**"³² was carried out. The research was conducted with the support of UNDP and USAID/PROLoG.

The study was ongoing for more than six months and produced two volumes. After a comprehensive review of Georgian law and policy, the first volume identifies remaining legislative and policy gaps related to gender equality across a range of fields – violence against women, political participation, peace and security – as well as in the cross-thematic laws on gender equality and anti-discrimination. Women's economic empowerment, health care, harmful practices, education and gender equality in culture and sport are exhaustively covered in the second volume of this study.

³² The full text of Volume I is available at http://www.parliament.ge/ge/ajax/downloadFile/84647/ENG-Vol1_GenderEqualityinGeorgia_BarriersandRecommendations_Final; and Volume II at http://www.parliament.ge/ge/ajax/downloadFile/84646/ENG_Volume2_Gender_Equality_in_Georgia_VOL2_ENG.

In 2019, with the support of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Gender Equality Council also issued two reports presenting the results of **thematic inquiries**, namely “Women’s Access to the State-Provided Vocational Education” and “Women’s Participation in State Economic Programmes”.

According to the **report on women’s participation in state economic programmes**, there are complex reasons that explain the low participation rate of women in state economic programmes. Among them are numerous socioeconomic factors preventing women from accessing programmes.³³ As a result, the GEC issued general and specific recommendations that could contribute to increasing the number of women benefiting from state programmes.

According to the **report on access to vocational education for women’s economic empowerment**,³⁴ there was no need for major legislative changes that would increase access to vocational education for women. Among the major obstacles impacting women’s access to vocational education are the limited access to transportation to the nearest vocational education institution, especially if the woman has to take care of a young child; the stereotypical attitudes in society; and the gender-based segregation of jobs. Recommendations from the findings of the thematic inquiry are intended for the relevant agencies of the executive branch, local self-governments and the state legislature.

The 2018 Georgia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is a multi-cluster survey repeatedly conducted in Georgia. The latest study was carried out from 2018 to 2019 by Geostat in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC), as part of the Global MICS Programme.³⁵ A total of 14,120 households participated in the study. The survey provided comprehensive results in multiple directions, creating a significant database for further analysis of women’s rights, children’s rights and societal attitudes towards such issues as sexual and reproductive health rights, the use of corporal punishment as a child-rearing method, and the extent of domestic violence, among others.

In 2018, the NGO Women’s Information Centre, with the support of GIZ in the framework of the Good Governance for Local Development Programme South Caucasus, conducted consultations in local municipalities in order to establish a gender equality institutional mechanism. The **Practical Guidelines for the Local Self-Governments to Implement Gender Equality Policies**³⁶ was developed through this assistance. The document describes the experience received from the consultation work performed in the municipalities. The document gives an overview of the obligations taken by the Government with regard to women’s rights and gender equality. The Practical Guidelines explains in popular language the authority of the institutional mechanisms ensuring gender equality in Georgia. In addition, the document provides the following: the definition of terms and answers to frequently asked questions that were posed during the development of gender equality policies in the municipalities; the instruction for self-government to form local gender equality institutional mechanisms; the job description for a person responsible for gender equality issues; and all necessary materials to develop a gender equality action plan.

³³ Thematic Research Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, “Women’s Participation in State Economic Programmes”, 2019. Available at <https://bit.ly/2NggzHG>.

³⁴ Thematic Inquiry Report of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, “Women’s Access to the State-Provided Vocational Education”, 2019. Available at <https://bit.ly/32aTQ4k>.

³⁵ Technical support was provided by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and, with government funding and financial support of UNICEF, National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Bank (WB), United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), Swedish International Development co-operation Agency (SIDA), French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement (AFD)), Swiss Agency for Development and co-operation (SDC), Italian National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS)), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Health Organisation (WHO).

³⁶ *National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Measures to be Implemented for the Protection of Victims (Survivors) for 2018-2020*, p. 11.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Ex Parte Legal Proceedings

The Georgian criminal legislation acknowledges public prosecution on behalf of society and in the public interest and ensures the application of the law where breaches of the law carry a criminal sanction, taking into account both the rights of the individual and the necessary effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Accordingly, the position of a victim does not determine the fate of continuation or termination of criminal legal proceedings against the perpetrator. The Criminal Procedure Code determines that no one is obliged to give an incriminating testimony against himself/herself or a close relative.³⁷ Close relatives are also defined under the Criminal Procedure Code.³⁸

New legislative changes to the Criminal Procedure Code entered into force on 1 January 2020 according to which an interrogator shall offer a consultation with the witness and victim co-ordinator³⁹ along with a reflection period of three days to a victim who is a close relative of the accused and who personally suffered emotional or physical harm or property damage.⁴⁰ This provision is an additional opportunity for the prosecution to be able to avoid a victim's refusal to testify against a close relative and to avoid a repeated risk of violence and threat of violence that can be the result of an acquittal.

Measures of Protection during Investigations and Judicial Proceedings

Article 57 of the Criminal Procedure Code regulates the rights of a victim during criminal legal proceedings. According to this article, a victim has the following rights:

- Be informed about the essence of the charges brought against the accused.
- Be informed about the procedural actions.
- Give testimony – during a hearing on the merits, during the review of a motion for rendering a ruling without a hearing on the merits and at the sentencing hearing – concerning the harm he/she has incurred as a result of the crime, or submit, in writing, that information to the court.
- Obtain, free of charge, copies of a decree/ruling and/or of a judgment on the termination of investigation and/or criminal prosecution, or of other final court decisions.
- Be indemnified for the expenses incurred as a result of participating in the proceedings.
- Recover his/her own property that was temporarily confiscated during the investigation and the court hearing for the needs of the case.
- Request the application of the special measures of protection if his/her or his/her close relatives' or family members' lives, health and/or property are endangered.
- Be informed on the progress of the investigation, and review the materials of the criminal case, unless this contradicts the interests of the investigation.
- Obtain information, upon request, on the measure of restraint applied against the accused, as well as information on the accused/convicted person's release from a penitentiary institution, unless this creates a risk for the accused/convicted person.
- Review the materials of the criminal case at least 10 days before a preliminary hearing.
- Request that the prosecution file a motion for closing (in part or in full) a court hearing for the purpose specified in Article 182(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code.
- Receive explanations as to his/her rights and obligations.
- Enjoy other rights granted under the Criminal Procedure Code.

³⁷ *Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia*, Article 49, paragraph 1.d.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Article 3, paragraph 2. "Close relative – a parent, an adoptive parent, a child, a foster child, a grandfather, a grandmother, a grandchild, a sister, a brother, a spouse (including a divorced spouse)."

³⁹ For more details about the Witness and Victim co-ordinator Service, please see Chapter 4.

⁴⁰ *Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia*, Article 50.

The Imprisonment Code of Georgia regulates the visitation rights of an accused person, as well as the privilege to send and receive correspondence and have telephone conversations, all of which can be restricted based on a resolution from the investigator or prosecutor.⁴¹ This rule is applied by the prosecution in the criminal cases of violence against women and domestic violence.

Since 2015, the state-funded Legal Aid Service has provided the survivors of domestic violence and violence against women with free legal consultations, the drafting of legal documents and court representation in protective order proceedings, irrespective of the victim's socioeconomic status.⁴² The Legal Aid Service provides free legal representation to the victims of domestic violence only if the person is socially vulnerable.

3.3 Institutional changes

Please also refer to the information given for the Second Objective

State shelters have been established for the victims of gender-based violence against women, where psychosocial rehabilitation, medical care and legal counselling are provided to the victims. Crisis centres are institution-run places of temporary placement for the alleged victims of violence and provide psychosocial rehabilitation, basic and emergency medical care and legal counselling. It is also possible to allow a victim to remain in his/her place of residence and remove the perpetrator from the premises, even if the perpetrator is the owner of those premises.

NGOs or Other Civil Society Actors and Domestic Violence Counsellors

The Network of Legal Aid Providers was established on 6 November 2017 by 11 founding organisations.

The main objectives of the Network's legal aid providers include providing support in the process of creating accessible and effective legal aid in Georgia; creating an effective and sustainable referral system for legal aid; and strengthening co-operation and co-ordination among the legal aid providers, among other goals.

The **Free Legal Aid Portal** (<http://free.mylaw.ge>) was created for those who do not have the financial resources to hire a lawyer and are looking for free legal aid. The portal includes information about the key public institutions that issue free consultations within their competence, such as the Network of Legal Aid Providers and other NGOs providing free legal aid and advice throughout the country. The search engine allows users to look for legal services by organisation, case category, city, type of service and type of consultation.

One of the priorities for the Government of Georgia is to co-operate with local NGOs to ensure the effective protection of the victims of domestic violence. An example of such co-operation is the work with the NGO Anti-Violence Network of Georgia (AVNG). The co-operation included raising awareness and educating police officers on domestic violence through the development of a module titled "Police and Domestic Violence" for police officers alongside a practical textbook for police titled "Manual for Police Officer Trainers on Domestic Violence"; the development of a curriculum on the topic "Domestic violence and operating mechanisms against it based on Georgian legislation" for the students of the Police Academy; training for police officers throughout Georgia; and the creation of permanent, so-called "open meetings" with the representatives of the MIA, the Prosecutor's Office, the MoLHSA and the local government.

The AVNG provides victims with a wide variety of quality services. All of the services provided by the AVNG are free of charge and anonymous. The services include the following:

⁴¹ *Imprisonment Code of Georgia*, Articles 77 and 79.

⁴² According to the changes introduced in 2018

Legal consultations: The applicant is provided with information on the existing legal mechanisms for protecting victims. The applicant receives a consultation directly from an AVNG lawyer from a member organisation, as well as online. The AVNG lawyer provides the beneficiaries of the member organisation with representation at the first-instance court on civil and administrative cases.

Psychological support: The AVNG crisis centre offers quality psychological assistance to the victims of domestic violence (children, teenagers and their family members, as well as adults). The service includes individual consultations, group therapy and training in social skills. AVNG's beneficiaries are also involved in a self-help group that functions with the support of AVNG.

Support from a social worker: The beneficiary that comes to the office receives comprehensive information from a social worker on the existing services for victims of domestic violence.

Shelter service: If the life and/or health of the domestic violence victim is being threatened, he/she is placed in a shelter, where he/she undergoes the relevant psychosocial rehabilitation. The organisation frequently plays the role of mediator between the beneficiary and his/her family.

Hotline: The applicants have the opportunity to receive information on the services of the organisation over the phone and online and to receive the appropriate legal consultation.

5 Other pertinent developments

Prompt and Appropriate Response

The classification of incoming calls at the emergency centre 112 is based on the information provided by the caller. The 112 operator determines the type of incident in the software, which is important to prioritise the case and determine resources needed to respond. It is not always possible to determine the gender of a caller; this is why the incoming calls are not disaggregated by sex. The number of calls to 112 claiming an incident categorised as "conflict/domestic violence" increased from 19,078 calls in 2016 to 20,496 calls in 2018.

Several new functions were added to the 112 databases according to which types of domestic violence are specified and to allow better processing of the statistical data. The decisions made on calls are also now being processed, which had not been done in previous years. The 112 call data are processed every six months to determine the number of proved calls, the number of calls on which an investigation has started, and the number of restrictive orders issued.

Procedures of Assessment

The risk assessment checklist⁴³ was developed by the MIA with the technical and financial support of UN Women and the European Union and in partnership with the US-based organisation Global Rights for Women.

The tool is entirely based on the global research and studies on domestic violence risk assessment and is informed by internationally established standards and best practices. The draft version of the risk assessment checklist was piloted and tested in 50 cases during the summer of 2018. The lack of a standardised domestic violence risk assessment methodology was repeatedly identified as a major gap in effective police response to domestic violence in the Public Defender's 2015 and 2016 special reports on violence against women in Georgia. The domestic violence risk assessment tool, effective as of 1 September 2018, enables police officers to document the history of violence suffered and evaluate the risks for lethality and re-offence using a standardised methodology.

Restraining or Protective Orders

Administrative law mechanisms are applied in the form of issuing restraining/protective orders, as well as when the nature of the offence, under the legislation of Georgia, does not invite criminal

⁴³ For details on the risk assessment checklist, please see Chapter 5 (Substantive Law).

liability and instead can be addressed under the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Code of Georgia.⁴⁴

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

As a result of the constitutional reform completed in December 2018, explicit wording on the State's obligation to ensure substantive equality between women and men has been included in the Constitution. In 2020, as a result of the amendments to the Election Code, for the first-time in history, gender quotas were adopted both – at the national (Parliament) and local (local self-governments) levels. Quotas guarantee at least quarter of women (currently, 14%) in the Parliament starting in 2020 with the further increase in the future and at least quarter of women (currently, 14%) at local councils.

4.2 Policy changes.

General Trends and changes

In Georgia, women's participation in decision-making processes remains low but progressive. Under Georgian law, men and women have equal rights as voters and candidates.

In 2016, amendments were made to the law on Gender Equality to include a requirement for each municipality or city assembly to form a gender equality council charged with promoting gender equality and countering gender discrimination at the local level.

With the majority (52%) of the country's population being female and a higher number of university graduates being women, the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes – including politics, speaks to inherent inequality caused by a wide range of gaps in economic and social lives, as well as low political awareness. The Constitution of Georgia upholds the value of equality and requires the government to ensure equality between men and women. However, *de facto* inequalities are still widespread.

The Central Election Commission (CEC) carries out relevant activities based on the principles of equality. The CEC acknowledges gender inequality in political participation as a serious challenge to Georgia's democracy and long-term development.

In 2011, The CEC established a Gender Equality Council responsible for creating and implementing a Gender Equality Policy of the Election Administration and supporting implementation of gender equality related recommendations elaborated by the GoG and international organisations. The administration drafted a Strategic Plan for 2015-2019 and annual action plans. One of the strategic objectives was to support the development of an environment with greater gender equality, through the implementation of a gender equality policy, encouraging women's participation in political and public life.

On 16 December 2018; the first female president of Georgia was sworn into office. As for the executive branch of the Government, currently, five women are serving as ministers in the government of 11 ministers, including the Prime Minister. In December 2017, the Parliament of Georgia elected a woman as Public Defender of Georgia for a term of 5 years.

⁴⁴ Law of Georgia on Violence against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence, Article 9.

4.3 Institutional changes

Georgia has strengthened its national institutional framework to monitor, co-ordinate and advance efforts targeted at Gender Equality. Georgia's national machinery for gender equality consists of three key bodies: a) the Gender Equality Council (GEC) within the legislative branch, b) the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Issues (CGE) within the executive branch of the Government; and c) the Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender's Office, within the country's national human rights institution.

Please refer to more information in the same part under the second objective

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Please refer to this part under the second objective

A pivotal element in the Government's efforts to ensure gender equality is to break down and eliminate gender stereotypes and unconscious bias and practices based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either sexes.

The Government has prioritised a wide range of issues including, but not limited to addressing domestic violence, trafficking, sexual assault, sexual harassment and harmful practices, such as early marriages and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).

A Task Force on Harmful Practices co-chaired by the CGE and UNFPA has been established. Apart from preventing early marriages it covers combating FGM/C. Numerous knowledge building activities have been conducted within the task force, including work with religious and spiritual leaders.

As of May 2017, the new Article 133² of Criminal Code prohibits female genital mutilation on any grounds, including both forceful acts as well as consensual. The Article provides for criminal responsibility of the person performing the cutting as well as any person coercing a woman/girl to undergo FGM/C, including family members.

Stereotypes that condone gender inequality still persist in Georgia. However, positive shifts in the societal perceptions of and attitudes towards gender equality and VAW/DV are obvious. The percentage of women who believe that domestic violence is a private matter and that no one should interfere has decreased from 78% in 2009⁴⁵ to 33% in 2017⁴⁶. Gender attitudes are less conservative. Men and women in the younger generation show more non-discriminatory attitudes. There has been a decrease in the rate of women who stayed with violent husbands because they believed the violence to be normal. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of women who have experienced intimate partner violence who have reported it to the police (from 1.5% in 2009⁴⁷ to 18% in 2018⁴⁸). All of this suggests that the concerted efforts to raise awareness and promote women's empowerment and rights in the country over the past years are having a positive impact.

⁴⁵ ACT National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia, 2009 (UNFPA)

⁴⁶ GEOSTAT National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia, 2018 (UN Women/EU)

⁴⁷ ACT National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia, 2009 (UNFPA)

⁴⁸ GEOSTAT National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia, 2018 (UN Women/EU)

4.5 Other pertinent developments

Please refer to the information given in the 1.1/1.2/1.3 parts of the first objective

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Residence Status and Gender-Based Asylum Claims

The Law of Georgia on International Protection regulates the grounds for granting international protection. The forms of international protection in Georgia are, refugee status, humanitarian status, and the status of a person under temporary protection.

Refugee status shall be granted to an alien or a stateless person who is outside his/her country of origin and has a well-grounded fear that he/she may become a victim of persecution on the grounds of his/her race, religion, nationality, affiliation to a certain social group or political views, and who does not wish to, or cannot, return to his/her country of origin or enjoy the right to be protected from his/her country due to such fear.⁴⁹

Humanitarian status shall be granted to an alien or a stateless person who does not comply with the conditions for granting refugee status as provided for by the law where there is a real risk that upon returning to his/her country of origin, he/she will face a serious threat of harm.⁵⁰

The status of a person under temporary protection is granted to those who require international protection and cannot return to their country of origin due to violence, aggression, international or internal armed conflict, or mass violation of human rights.⁵¹

In the case of the illegal entry into or stay in the territory of Georgia of an alien or a stateless person, he/she shall immediately apply to the authorised official with a request for granting the appropriate status.

Humanitarian status and the status of a person under temporary protection are granted for a one-year term. The term may be extended by an additional year, and it may be extended more than once.⁵²

According to the Georgian legislation, an action is deemed to be an act of persecution if the action is so serious by its nature or repetition or represents a combination of various actions that are so severe that fundamental human rights continue to be violated.⁵³

Persecution may take different forms, including physical or psychological violence; sexual violence; discriminatory legal, administrative and/or judicial acts and measures; disproportionate or discriminatory criminal persecution or punishment; or an act that, by its nature, is related to gender identity, sex or a juvenile.⁵⁴

Serious harm is considered to be the death penalty or the threat of punishment by death; torture, degrading or inhuman treatment or punishment; and serious threat to the life of a person due to violence, international or internal armed conflict, or mass violation of human rights.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Law of Georgia on International Protection, Article 15.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Article 19.

⁵¹ Ibid., Article 21.

⁵² Ibid., Articles 19 and 21.

⁵³ Ibid., Article 32, paragraph 1.

⁵⁴ Ibid., paragraph 2.

⁵⁵ Ibid., paragraph 3.

When assessing a reasonable fear of persecution or the possibility of serious harm, an authorised official shall rely on the circumstances that arose in the asylum seeker's country of origin prior to or after the asylum seeker left the country.⁵⁶

The application for international protection shall be reviewed in an ordinary manner within six months of its receipt. If needed, the consideration period may be extended.

If the application is rejected, the decision can be appealed to a court. An asylum seeker can apply to the Legal Aid Service during the appeal procedures and request the appointment of a lawyer.

The Legal Aid Service offers free legal consultations in order to ensure the protection of the rights of asylum seekers. They are entitled to use person-to-person and telephone/online consultation services. The Legal Aid Service provides legal assistance (court representation) to asylum seekers despite their insolvency.

Protection of the rights of the asylum seekers, refugee and humanitarian status holders, and persons under temporary protection is guaranteed by the national and international legislation.

In accordance with the rules established by the legislation, the Legal Aid Service ensures the provision of free legal assistance to the asylum seekers and persons under temporary protection in cases where their application has been rejected and where their status has been terminated, suspended or revoked.⁵⁷ They are released from the payment of court fees during the litigation proceedings related to being granted international protection.

An asylum seeker is entitled to the services of an interpreter free of charge and to be interviewed by an authorised official and use the services of an interpreter of the same gender during the implementation of the asylum procedure.⁵⁸

If an asylum seeker has been refused a refugee or humanitarian status or if his/her humanitarian status has been terminated, cancelled or withdrawn, and if it is also impossible to exile him/her to the country of origin in accordance with the Law of Georgia on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons, he/she may be granted the right to remain in Georgia temporarily.

An asylum seeker can be temporarily housed in a reception centre designated for asylum seekers. The placement term for a person in a reception centre depends on the length of proceedings related to the review of his/her application.⁵⁹

The LEPL Agency for State Care serves beneficiaries (and their legal representatives) irrespective of their race, skin colour, gender, language, religion, political or other belief, origin (national, ethnic and social), property status or health condition.

The Agency for State Care is authorised to apply to the LEPL Public Service Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia with the request to issue temporary residence permits for its beneficiaries. A temporary residence permit can be issued to a foreign citizen or a stateless person if he/she has victim status under the Law of Georgia on Violence against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence and if a recommendation is given by the victim's service provider or the authority in charge of the proceedings.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Ibid., Article 31.

⁵⁷ Ibid., Article 76.

⁵⁸ Ibid., Article 56.

⁵⁹ Ibid., paragraph "f".

⁶⁰ *Law of Georgia on Violence against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence*, Article 17, paragraph 4.

The following shall be taken into consideration when assessing an application for international protection:

- All relevant facts related to the country of origin, including the legislation and other regulations, as well as established practices.
- Documentation submitted by the asylum seeker, including information regarding the fact that he/she is being persecuted or may become a victim of persecution and that he/she has suffered or may suffer serious harm.
- The personal information of the asylum seeker.
- The possibility that the asylum seeker may be persecuted or seriously harmed if he/she returns to the country of origin.
- The possibility that the asylum seeker may enjoy the protection of a country that is not his/her country of origin and to which he/she is a citizen.⁶¹

Status holders are entitled to exercise the right to employment, to education (including preschool and secondary education and professional and higher education) and to medical assistance through state health-care programmes that citizens of Georgia enjoy, as well as the right to be provided with social, economic and day-to-day living conditions and to be employed independently or with the help of an employer. Persons with refugee or humanitarian status are entitled to the right to free movement both inside as well as outside the country.

Non-Refoulement

The principle of non-expulsion is covered by Article 8 of the Law on International Protection and determines that an asylum seeker or internationally protected person shall not be returned or expelled to the border of the country where his/her life or freedom is endangered on the grounds of his/her race, religion, nationality, affiliation to a certain social group or political views.

The non-refoulement principle does not apply to an asylum seeker or internationally protected person in connection with whom there are sufficient grounds to believe that he/she poses a threat to the state security of Georgia, nor to those who have been convicted of committing a grave crime in Georgia on the basis of a court ruling having entered into legal force, nor to those who pose a threat to the public.

It is important to refer to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons, which lists those persons who cannot be removed from Georgia, among whom are the following: an alien under the custody of a citizen of Georgia; an alien reasonably assumed to be a victim of, or affected by, the crime of human trafficking; an alien who is a victim of violence against women and/or domestic violence, until the relevant proceedings are finished and/or during the temporary housing period at a shelter for domestic violence victims; an alien who has been given a conditional sentence or a non-custodial sentence, except where there is a court decision on his/her deportation and if he/she is a danger to state security and public order in Georgia.⁶²

Conflict-Affected Women and the People Living in the Occupied Territories of Georgia

The Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia determines the legal status of an IDP; the basis and the procedure for granting, terminating, withdrawing and restoring IDP status; and the legal, economic and social guarantees as well as the rights and duties of an IDP.

According to the law, an internally displaced person (IDP) is a citizen of Georgia or a stateless person with said status in Georgia who was forced to leave his/her permanent place of residence because the occupation of the territory by a foreign country, aggression, an armed conflict, global violence and/or massive violation of human rights posed a threat to his/her or his/her family members' life,

⁶¹ *Law of Georgia on International Protection*, Article 36.

⁶² *Law of Georgia on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons*, Article 61.

health or freedom, and/or, taking any of the said reasons into consideration, he/she cannot return to his/her permanent place of residence.⁶³

A minor citizen child of Georgia or a stateless minor child with said status in Georgia shall be entitled to IDP status if one or both of his/her parents have been granted and/or were granted IDP status, only on the basis of the consent of a parent(s) or any other legal representative.⁶⁴

IDPs are entitled to:

- Receive IDP allowance.
- Receive social and other assistance, in accordance with the procedure and terms established by the legislation of Georgia.
- Use a proper living accommodation on the territory of Georgia until returning to their permanent place of residence, except when he/she has been provided with a long-term living accommodation.⁶⁵

The well-being of IDPs from the occupied territories of Georgia is one of the most important challenges for the country and has been the focus of many active efforts for several years. The protection of IDPs' rights is one of the main functions of the state-funded Legal Aid Service, which offers legal advice to IDPs for this purpose. IDPs are entitled to use person-to-person and telephone/online consultation services.

The Legal Aid Service provides legal assistance for the protection of refugees' rights when:

- The rights determined under the Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia or by-laws have been violated and when the insolvent IDP is authorised to request the appointment of a lawyer.
- The provision of legal assistance to a refugee (e.g. representation in a court or administrative agency) is advisable because a case is categorised as complex and important.

5.2 Policy changes

Please refer to the information provided in the 5.1. part of this objective

Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia, together with DCAF (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance) and in partnership with the Spanish and UK defence ministries, implemented the "Women, Peace and Security Organisational Assessment" project, financially supported by the NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme. The project was designed to improve the gender balance and reduce the barriers to women within the Defence Forces of Georgia by contributing to Georgia's strategic objectives to implement UNSCR 1325 and its related resolutions. Moreover, it aimed to build the Ministry's capacity to design, develop and execute gender-related organisational climate studies and develop recommendations.

Training on gender perspectives and UNSCR 1325 and its related resolutions is part of pre-deployment training for peacekeepers. About 1,600 military service men and women were trained in 2019. Gender and domestic violence issues are also subjects included in PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) sessions held by ministry psychologists post-deployment.

Since 2016, the regular information-sharing meetings between civil society and representatives of the local conflict-affected community and the participants of the GID and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) have been led by the Office of the State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. The information-sharing meetings have

⁶³ *Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia*, Article 6, paragraph 1.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Article 6, paragraph 2.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Article 12, paragraph 1.

become a well-established platform for regular dialogue between civil society representatives, GID and IPRM participants.

Georgian participants of the GID and the IPRM meet regularly with the representatives of civil society, including NGOs, women's rights defenders and with the conflict-affected and IDP women in order to ensure that the needs and priorities of women IDPs and conflict-affected women are integrated into the planning for the peace process and raised at the negotiation formats, particularly at the GID and IPRM.

The NAP on WPS envisages increasing the expertise of staff members in WPS issues. As the provision of tailored training is the primary mechanism of implementing this commitment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia together with UN Women developed a training course at the Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia that was piloted in February 2020. The training is intended for public servants dealing with the issues related to the peaceful resolution of conflict.

The Mental Health System Development Strategy is being updated to address the needs of displaced and conflict-affected populations, especially women and girls.

In 2019, the gender advisers institutionalisation process was completed at the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. At the brigade level, military appointees in G1 and S1 positions fulfil the same functions as gender advisers.

Moreover, a special training curriculum for gender advisers was created that itself became mandatory for the above-mentioned positions at the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. In addition, a special MOC (Military Occupational Code) was defined for gender advisers by the decree of the Chief of Defence of the Georgian Defence Forces.

In addition to increasing staff expertise on WPS issues, the NAP on WPS envisages addressing the needs of IDP and conflict-affected women in the official negotiations. Representatives of the Government of Georgia continuously raise the issues of IDP and conflict-affected women in both the GID and the IPRM with the aim of finding durable solutions for the needs of the women affected by the Russia-Georgia conflict. The Georgian representatives especially highlight the challenges related with illegal detention and kidnapping, oppression and ethnic discrimination of women, as well as other cases of grave violations of basic human rights and freedoms.

Moreover, the NAP on WPS envisages facilitating women's meaningful participation in the peace negotiations. The Georgian Government continues its efforts to further support women's meaningful engagement in the GID and IPRM. Between 2017 and 2020, the involvement of women in both formats has varied between 20% to 40%.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Access to Legal Aid

Reform of the legal aid system is being gradually carried out in Georgia. The aim of the reform is to make effective and competent free legal aid services accessible for national and ethnic minorities, internally displaced persons from Georgia's occupied territories, asylum seekers and stateless persons in line with international standards.

The Legal Aid Service provides free legal services through its bureaus and consultation centres. Raising accessibility of legal assistance particularly in the regions populated by ethnic minorities and where the access to legal remedies is somewhat limited due to social and cultural specificities of the regions, has been the main priority of the Service in 2019.

In 2019, the Legal Aid Service launched a new bureau in Ozurgeti and three consultation centres (in Duisi, Tsageri and Shuakhevi). The opening of a new consultation centre in Duisi is of particular importance in terms of improving access of ethnic minorities residing in that region to legal aid.

Territorial accessibility of the legal aid remains one of the top priorities in 2020. It is planned to have 33 new consultation centres gradually opened in various regions of Georgia, including in the regions resided by ethnic minorities (Gardabani, Bolnisi, Lagodekhi, Tetrtskaro, Dmanisi and others). The above consultation centres will be fully equipped.

One of the main objectives of the Legal Aid Service is to raise legal awareness of its beneficiaries, making them better equipped to enforce their rights. The Service regularly carries out field consultations in the regions for fulfilment of this objective. The Legal Aid Service held 133 field consultation meetings including in the regions populated by ethnic minorities.

The informational meetings addressed topics of interest to the citizens, including the prohibition of discrimination and right to equality; the rights of asylum seekers; the rights of ethnic and religious minorities; violence against women and domestic violence; family law and inheritance related issues; labour rights; children's rights, land registration; agriculture support programmes; projects to support businesses in Georgia.

It is planned to organise informational field visits in almost all regions of Georgia populated by ethnic minorities throughout 2020 in order to inform local communities on the legal issues of their interest.

In order to eradicate language barrier in the communication with representatives of ethnic and national minorities, the Legal Aid Service signed a Memorandum of co-operation with the Translation Bureau. When needed, the interpreters participate in the field visits and in other activities of the Service.

The Legal Aid Service developed innovative projects within its mandate to assist ethnic minorities in applying their rights. The project "Mobile Groups" aimed at making legal aid service accessible to the population residing in the settlements close to the border. The project "Video and Radio" runs awareness raising campaigns through video and radio reports.

In 2019, 7,000 information booklets (triplets) were distributed in Armenian and Azeri languages about new electronic services of the business registry under the National Public Registry Agency in the villages resided by ethnic minorities (Kumurdo, Poka, Baraleti, Sadaxlo, Kazreti, Iormughanlo, Kabala, Martkopi, Sartichala community centres) for the purpose of enhancing ethnic minorities' access to public services.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

In 2017, a Gender Impact Assessment methodology was piloted in the Parliament to assess the impact of certain policies and pieces of legislation on women and men and how this policy can contribute to gender equality. Within the scope of the 2017 pilot, staffers of the legislature have drafted a Gender Impact Assessment report on draft amendments to the Labour Code related to narcotics. The report has been submitted to the Parliamentary committee on drug policy for consideration.

The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia was involved in the development of the guidelines "Practical recommendations for the representatives of the local self-government in the implementation of a gender equality policy", which covers the issues related to women's rights, violence against women and domestic violence.

In co-operation with UN Women, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture started a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) of its agriculture development programmes and conducted the gender audit. In June 2020, FAO started a distance-learning course on gender mainstreaming, in which nine staff members of the Ministry participated. In addition, 68 employees were trained on gender limitations in the agriculture sector.

6.2 Policy changes.

Please refer to the information given for the 2.2 part under the second objective

6.3 Institutional changes

Please refer to the information given for the 2.3 part under the second objective

GERMANY

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.3 Institutional changes

Starting in autumn 2020, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, in co-operation with EAF Berlin, has launched dialogue forums on the topic of sexism with relevant representatives from employers and employees, from the media and culture, politics, civil society and the state. The aim is to develop recommendations for action against sexism. In concrete terms, dialogue forums on the topics of “sexism in culture and the media”, “sexism in the public sphere” and “sexism in the workplace” have taken place in digital form. In the dialogue forums, scientific findings and experiences were shared and good practices for preventing sexism were exchanged and developed. In addition, there will be a conference at the beginning of 2021. On this basis recommendations for different sectors will be summarised in a handout.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

By order of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) in 2020 the study “sexism in everyday life” has been published by Prof Dr Wippermann. The representative study shows that sexism is a relevant problem for many people in Germany, especially in the public sector, advertisement, and media as well as workplace. The complete German study can be found here: <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/service/publikationen/sexismus-im-alltag/141250>

In November 2019, ProQuota Media has presented the results of the study “Which share in the journalistic power do women have in Germany?”, which has been financially supported by the BMFSFJ. The study, which has analysed the female share of power in print and online newspaper offices, has shown that there is a lack of female share of power in print and online newspaper offices. This problem concerns many media genres, such as supra-regional daily newspapers and supra-regional weekly newspapers. The female share of power is the smallest in the regional newspapers, where less than 10% of the editors-in-chief are female.

Since October 2019, the BMFSFJ has been financially supporting the project “Share your Power” from ProQuota Film. Till October 2020 there have been two quota congresses, that have been accompanied by social media campaigns. Campaigns and congresses have sensitised for the problem that there is a multiple discrimination of women in the German film industry. The campaign has also shown best-practice examples of the film industries in other countries, that have helped to fight against a sex-based discrimination of women in the film industries of these countries. International Round Tables, together with female film organisations from 25 other countries, as part of the Berlinale 2020, have also helped to increase the awareness in the international film industry, that there is a lack of female participation in leading positions in the international film industry.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

In order to combat and prevent sexism the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is financially supporting the “school against sexism” from the organisation Pinkstinks from 2019 to 2021. The “school against sexism” promotes discussions about sexism and gender. More information can be found on this homepage: <https://pinkstinks.de/schule-gegen-sexismus/>. The “school against sexism” helps in all fields from a) to i) to fight effectively against sexism.

The BMFSFJ is also financially supporting the homepage www.genderleicht.de from the female journalists association (jb) from 2018 to 2021. The jb has developed a homepage that helps journalists to produce media content that is gender equitable. One important recommendation of the homepage is for example not to use the generic masculine in media reports, because the generic masculine makes women invisible. The homepage www.genderleicht.de helps especially in the field of language and communication, but also in the field of media/advertising and other communication.

At the end of 2019, the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA) carried out a campaign on strategies against sexual harassment at the workplace. The “#Business Climate Protection” campaign was aimed at employers, managers and HR-managers and focused on SMEs. In daily newspapers, journals and on online portals, the FADA drew attention to the duty of protection of employers under the German Equal Treatment Act (AGG). Furthermore, a new project on collection of good practices by employers on preventing sexual harassment at the workplace was started in 2020. Identified good practices will be published on FADA’s website in 2021.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

A broad overview of the legislative changes in connection to the Istanbul Convention was recently published in Germany’s first state report for GREVIO. The report can be accessed here: <https://rm.coe.int/state-report-from-germany/pdfa/16809f59c6>

2.2 Policy changes

In 2020 the construction financing part of the funding programme “Together against Violence towards Women” started. For the federal investment programme, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth allocated a minimum of 120 Mio € until 2024. Funding is provided for the expansion, conversion, new construction, refurbishment, and acquisition of support facilities as part of innovative projects. The aim is to close known gaps in service provision and further expand the available support offer.

The innovation part of the programme was launched in 2019 with the funding of five national projects. The federal government plans to allocate 5 Mio € per year for the period 2020 to 2022 for the funding of innovative projects.

COVID-19

On 15 October 2020, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth launched a project called “Sustainable technical empowerment for counselling services and women’s shelters during the COVID-19 pandemic - Helpsystem 2.0”. The ministry is funding (as part of the federal funding programme “Together against Violence towards Women”) the improvement of technical equipment and qualification in women’s shelters and counselling services as well as translation services during the COVID-19 pandemic and is allocating more than 3 Mio € towards the project.

The German government passed a bill for easier access to social security and protection of social services due to COVID-19. This bill also includes measures for violence protection services, like women’s shelters and women’s support services.

The National Helpline “Violence Against Women”, funded by the German Government, is continuing their extremely important service during the COVID-19 pandemic. It offers around the clock support on 365 days per year and can be reached via phone, chat or email. More than 80 qualified female support workers offer help and guidance to women, who are affected by violence, people from their social circle and professionals working in the sector. The support is free, anonymous, confidential and available in 18 languages.

2.3 Institutional changes

The German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is currently funding the development of a proposal to create “Berichterstattstelle(n) zu geschlechtsspezifischer Gewalt und Menschenhandel” (Special rapporteur(s) on gender-specific violence and human trafficking) led by the German Institute for Human Rights (Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte – DIMR). This project aims at developing a comprehensive concept for data collection and research in order to effectively implement targeted measures to combat violence against women and human trafficking.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Awareness raising

The federal innovation programme also includes the nationwide initiative “#Stärker als Gewalt” (Stronger than Violence). The aim of the initiative is to raise public awareness of the extent of violence against women and to encourage each and every individual to take a pro-active stance against it.

As part of this initiative the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth launched the nationwide “Not safe at home?” campaign in April 2020 with the aim to reach women regardless of the COVID-19 related restrictions. For this campaign several thousand supermarkets and other organisations nationwide directed victims of domestic violence towards the website www.staerker-als-gewalt.de to inform about available support offers.

November 2020 was proclaimed as action month against domestic violence as part of the initiative. With a variety of materials and actions, online and offline, the initiative raised awareness for the topic and encouraged members of the public to actively intervene. On top of that a neighbourhood action was launched to bring the message of the initiative into the immediate community. With the help of a broad variety of partnerships, e.g. with linked transport systems, several associations and enterprises the message of the initiative is broadly published so that more people gain confidence to access help, help others or let others help them. The neighbourhood action goes on beyond the end of November.

Research

The project “FEM-UnitED for prevention of femicides at national and European level” of the Institute for Empirical Sociology at the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg is co-funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth as part of the federal investment programme “Together against violence towards women” and funded by the EU as part of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme.

This project’s aim is to develop and strengthen strategies on national and European level in partnership with representatives of other member states to eradicate gender-related killings of women and to implement these strategies in practice and policy. It can be assumed that the results will make an important contribution towards the prevention of femicides in Germany and that the conclusions can be used on a long-term basis. The research work in the field of femicide prevention and the resulting prevention strategies are targeted towards awareness raising and education among the specialist sector, the general public and political decision-making.

According to the “UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” the Federal Government supports the establishment of women's representatives in workshops and institutions for disabled people with various projects. The German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth funds the projects:

- “Strengthening the Federal Network of Women's Representatives in Facilities” by the organisation “Weibernetz e.V.” (Oct 2019 -Sept. 2022). The aim is strengthening the “Federal Network of Women's Representatives in Facilities” and enabling it to act as a permanent representation of the interests of women representatives in workshops and residential facilities.
- “Political representation of disabled women - for equal opportunities and protection against violence” (March 2018 - February 2021). The project serves to implement the “UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” to improve the situation for women with disabilities and their protection against violence. It aims to continuously represent the interests of women with disabilities in public institutions, committees and at conferences at national and international level.

In October 2019 the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA) published the study “Dealing with sexual harassment at the workplace - strategies for solution and intervention”, which was carried out

by Dr Monika Schröttle. The study provides quantitative and qualitative data on employees' experiences with sexual harassment in the workplace as well as on the conditions for a positive/negative outcome countering sexual harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, it makes recommendations for employers, public institutions and the legislator how to prevent and fight sexual harassment at the workplace. Apart from this FADA regularly publishes data on complaints concerning sexual harassment at the workplace.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

At the informal video conference of EU Gender Equality Ministers on 20 November 2020, 22 EU Member States supported the German initiative for a uniform Europe-wide number for national violence against women helplines. With the end of the German presidency, this initiative has been taken over by the EU Commission and Germany's Trio Partners Portugal and Slovenia.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

By the Law on the Modernisation of Criminal Procedure of 10 December 2019 (Gesetz zur Modernisierung des Strafverfahrens, BGBl. 2019 I, 2121) in criminal proceedings, the following improvement for victims of sexual crimes, who are very often women and girls, was achieved: In protection of their interests and with their consent the testimonies of all victims of sexual crimes - no matter whether they are minors or grown-ups -, that are given before a judge, are now to be recorded in picture and sound. These recordings can be displayed during the main proceedings and used as evidence (Sections 58a and 255a of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CCP - Strafprozessordnung - StPO)). Thereby repeated interviews and revictimisation can be avoided.

3.3 Institutional changes

The percentage of women is still growing in all parts of justice, from passed exams to lawyers, prosecutors and judges. In 2018 about 46% of judges and 49% of prosecutors were women; while only 35% of the lawyers. On the other hand, at the same time more than 57% of the students who passed their second state exam were women. This can be expected to be reflected in a further increase of the percentage of females in the numbers of lawyers, prosecutors and judges in the next years.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Judges and prosecutors receive regular training. Especially the German Judicial Academy, a co-financed institution by the Federal Government and the 16 Länder, offers regularly training especially with the content of gender equality ("Dealing with conflicts - gender conflicts").

3.5 Other pertinent developments

At the moment there are no further reforms planned.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

In the federal states of Brandenburg and Thüringen, parity laws for the equal participation of women in parliaments were passed in 2020. The laws stipulate that the list positions of all parties for state parliamentary elections must be filled alternately by women and men. The nomination of direct candidates is not affected by the new regulations. In the meantime, the state constitutional courts have declared both laws to be incompatible with the state constitutions. Appeals against both rulings are pending before the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe.

4.4 Research and awareness

From 2019 to 2022 the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) is financially supporting the Helene Weber College. To gain women for local politics and to support women active in local politics – that is the central concern of the Helene Weber College. The college offers for the first time a cross-party platform with numerous information, networking and further training offers for women committed to and interested in local politics. In September 2020, the Helene Weber Prize, which is an award for outstanding local female politicians, has been awarded by the BMFSFJ for the fourth time. In 2020 an empowerment-programme for women with migration background in the political parties has also started as part of the Helene Weber College

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

In Germany, international protection can already be granted in cases of persecution due to affiliation to certain social groups (Section 3 para. 1 asylum act (Asylgesetz)). Potential acts of persecution include in particular activities tied to a certain gender affiliation (Section 3a para. 2 no. 6 asylum act).

5.2 Policy changes

The Federal Office for Refugees and Migration since 1996 has trained and engaged specifically skilled and sensitised special representatives for asylum proceedings concerning applicants with special vulnerabilities, e.g. due to gender affiliated persecution or victims of human trafficking.

Funding for the project ‘Asylum and trafficking in human beings’ (Flucht und Menschenhandel), implemented by the German NGO network against trafficking in human beings (KOK), has been extended until end of 2021 (financed by the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration). The goals of this project are to:

- support projects implemented by the member organisations that have a special focus on refugees
- sensitise various actors to the phenomenon of human trafficking in the context of asylum and international protection
- improve identification of trafficked persons in the context of asylum and international protection
- protect trafficked persons in accommodation for persons seeking international protection.

Several member organisations of the KOK are implementing projects that focus on human trafficking in the context of asylum and international protection. These projects focus on various aspects, including, for example, the identification of trafficked persons, counselling services to specific groups (for example, women from sub-Saharan Africa), empowerment and integration of refugees affected by human trafficking, counselling on work and training, and integration into the labour market, etc.

5.3 Institutional changes.

In 2019, Germany has amended the asylum act introducing a new regulation according to which federal states have to take appropriate measures to ensure the protection of women and vulnerable persons, such as children, in refugee accommodation centres (Section 44 para. 2a, 53 para. 3).

5.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2019, Germany has amended the asylum act introducing a new regulation establishing a voluntary and independent asylum advisory service (Section 12a para. 1 asylum act).

DaMigra, the umbrella association of migrant women organisations, is active nationwide. With the projects #selbstbestimmt (#selfdetermined) funded by BMFSFJ and BAMF from 2019 to 2022, DaMigra facilitates safe spaces where women can discuss self-determined themes. In this project DaMigra is moreover active in lobbying and networking on a federal level, empowers migrant women and makes them visible.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

Since 2017 the Federal Office for Refugees and Migration has also trained and sensitised interpreters how to deal sensitively with special vulnerabilities.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

No legislative changes.

6.2 Policy changes

A national Gender Equality Strategy of the Federal Government has been adopted in June 2020. It contains 9 goals for more gender equality and nearly 70 measures to achieve the goals. For more details see <http://www.bmfsfj.de/rgs-en>. The state of implementation of the measures will be updated in the middle of 2021.

6.3 Institutional changes

The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety established a new unit in charge of the development and application of gender aspects in environmental policy.

Moreover, a new Federal Foundation on Gender Equality will be founded soon.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

An EU-granted project raised the awareness for the meaning of unpaid care work for gender equality. The care regime is settled by a range of policy fields - so the research on gender equality at unpaid care work is a kind of a new mainstreaming approach. For more information see <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/meta/en/publications-en/who-takes-care-of-children--household-and-the-elderly-/160284>.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

A project is started to update the checklist for gender impact assessments.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the largest social challenge in Germany in the reporting period. In many cases, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the inequalities between men and women. In addition, we have seen that any lock-down regulations have put women and girls under an increased risk of becoming victims of domestic violence. But we have also seen that it is mainly women who keep our society up and running – be it because they are employed in critical infrastructure occupations or by taking on the main share of childcare and home schooling while schools and day care centres are closed. Now we have to make sure that women and girls will not have to carry the main burden of the pandemic on the long run.

8. Additional comments, if any

Internationally, Germany is engaged as a leader of the Action Coalition “Socio economic rights and justice” of the Generation Equality Forum.

GREECE

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

The promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in Greece is implemented under the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, as elaborated by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSFPGE). The GSFPGE is the competent governmental authority for the promotion of gender equality, and the design, implementation and monitoring of national equality policies and combating gender discrimination and was established in 1985. In 2015 the 2nd National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020 was drafted, entered into consultation and was adopted, building on the previous National Action Plan for Substantive Gender Equality 2010-2013 (extended to 2015).

The new National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025 is currently under elaboration after reviewing the previous one and it will be announced by the end of 2020 or early 2021. Its main priorities are in line with the priorities of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and will include labour market, economic empowerment and work-life balance. Initiatives on dealing with gender pay gap situation will be vital part of the new Action Plan. In brief, the new National Action Plan is structured in the following axes:

- Preventing and combating VAW and domestic violence.
- Equal participation of women in decision making/leadership.
- Equal participation of women in the labour market.
- Gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies (education, public administration, health, culture, sports etc).

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The GSFPGE participates as partner to the project “Capacity building for women candidates and media stakeholders in public debates in Greece” which aims to support projects promoting equality for women and men in public debates, in leadership positions in politics and in the corporate sector. It specifically aims to address existing barriers for journalists and women in public debates. The Project called “GENDER_PUBLIC DEBATE” started at April 2019 and its duration will be 22 months.

There is a website developed especially for the project, which will act as a node of all information, deliverables and awareness raising material concerning the project throughout its duration and will be under the administration of GSFPGE: <https://nosexism.isotita.gr/en/start-page/>

The following dissemination material produced in the framework of the project during 2020 is worth mentioning:

- [A Practical Guide for Journalists and Media stakeholders](#), aiming to empower women exposed to public discourse so as to identify sexist and stereotypical behaviour, to encourage an open and respectful discussion of sexism in the media, in order to create fairer, more positive and inclusive media representation of women. The Guide includes practical tips and communication techniques to help journalists and media stakeholders to react or respond to sexism or stereotype-driven behaviour – or, even, prevent it. The Guide, also, contains general information and statistics on the position of women in public discourse and their empowerment needs, and provides a conceptual framework within which sexism may operate.
- [A Practical Guide for women politicians and candidates](#), aiming to empower women exposed to public discourses so to identify sexist and stereotypical behaviours, to encourage an open and respectful debate of everyday sexism in order to create fairer, more positive and inclusive

organisational environments. The guide includes practical tips and communication techniques to help women in the public sphere to react or respond to sexism or stereotype-driven behaviour. The guide, also, contains general information and statistics on the position of women in public discourse and their empowerment needs, continues with the demarcation of concepts, and is supplemented with case studies and examples that can be used by anyone interested in tackling stereotypes and sexism behaviour in public debates.

- A video spot on sexism (in Greek)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60FAJMFhox8&feature=youtu.be>

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

- The prevention and combating of violence against all women regardless of their status, race, origin, physical or mental health, in Greece has traditionally been top priority for the GSFPGE, which is implementing since 2010 the “National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women”. This was the first comprehensive and coherent national action plan against gender-based violence. The “National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women”, refers to all forms of gender-based violence (e.g. domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, trafficking in women) and is part of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020 and of the next National action Plan 2021-2025 which is under elaboration.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** highlights gender inequality in all its forms, with serious consequences in women’s health, their rights, and freedoms worldwide, and it is worth noting the direct and indirect consequences of quarantine to all women and girls in Greece, with a particular emphasis towards vulnerable groups of our community, such as women refugees and migrants, women living in poverty, women with disabilities, single parents women, low-skilled women workers etc. The GSFPGE supervises and co-ordinates the integrated network of structures operating across the country to tackle gender-based violence (and all forms of violence) and protect and support women victims. The network consists of:

- The bilingual SOS 15900 helpline, a nationwide telephone line that provides immediate assistance in emergency cases on a 24-hour basis (in Greek and English), all year long; at the same time, it is possible for women to communicate electronically through the e-mail address: sos15900@isotita.gr. The helpline is free of cost for most telecommunication companies operating in Greece, otherwise it is of very low-cost;
- 42 counselling centres that provide social, psychological, legal and employment support services;
- 20 shelters that offer safe accommodation to women victims of violence and their underage children.

As part of the emergency measures to address and prevent the further spread of the COVID-19 (from March 2020 onwards), the GSFPGE sent instructions to all structures on their operational procedures in the current situation in order to protect the health of both employees and women victims addressed there. At the same time, the GSFPGE has also informed the local government bodies, in the framework of which the counselling centres and the shelters are operating. All structures continued and continue to offer their services adapted to the emergency restrictive measures in force due to the coronavirus, while tele-working and telephone support sessions have already been ensured and are being implemented.

In emergency cases that needed accommodation, the General Secretariat, in collaboration with the Hellenic Society of Forensic Medicine, has offered during the lockdown measures special accommodation, with free housing and meals throughout Greece to women and their under aged children living in poverty, migrants and in situations of vulnerability. In the cases of women victims

of violence, free medical tests were provided by the Hellenic Society of Forensic Medicine when required or needed.

In addition, free of charge medical tests for the children of women gender-based violence victims were offered by “The Smile of the Child”, a voluntary, non-profit child welfare organisation. **The GSFPGE collaboration with “The Smile of the Child”** has been actually confirmed by the signing of a co-operation Agreement between the 2 organisations for the protection and holistic support of women and children victims of violence.

With continuous posts on the social media of our governmental organisation and in the media (press and electronic press, television news broadcasts), the possibility of increasing incidents of domestic violence was stressed in order to inform and raise public awareness. At the same time, women who remained at home were urged not to remain silent but report possible violence incidents. They were also informed about the support structures. A video spot was published as part of the central campaign of the Greek Government “We Stay at Home”, with the message “We Stay at Home but We Don't Stay Silent”. The [video spot](#) has been widely broadcast on all national television channels. In addition, a weekly statistical processing of data deriving from the common database of the network was launched, in order to have a complete and accurate assessment of the effects of the restrictive measures on the increase of domestic violence rates.

- **In terms of the Hellenic Police actions:**

a. The Hellenic Police, in the context of its mission, has at the core of its action, the protection of victims of domestic violence, the investigation of the relevant criminal acts and the collection of evidence, for the referral of the perpetrators to justice.

Furthermore, the Hellenic Police undertakes initiatives or actively participates in the initiatives of other co-responsible Bodies, to prevent this phenomenon, through information and efforts to raise public awareness.

b. The Department for Combating of Domestic Violence/General Policing Division, in the context of its mission and bearing in mind that the temporary restriction measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic for the limit if its diaspora might both lead to increase of domestic violence incidents, and make more difficult the access to or affect the willingness of the citizens to access to Police Services, has sent orders with special guidelines to all subordinate police services regarding the reporting of domestic violence incidents. In particular, in these orders was highlighted the need for strict implementation of existing legislation and the demonstration, by police personnel, of the required sensitivity, responsibility and professionalism. The need for immediate and appropriate action was also stressed during the handling of incidents of domestic violence and also the need to inform the victims about the available housing structures and psychosocial - legal support services.

Finally, in order to assist the work of the police officers who handle domestic violence cases, lists of contact details were sent again, with contact information and the addresses of the Counselling Centres of the Research Centre for Gender Equality and the Municipalities.

c. It is also pointed out that the Hellenic Police Headquarters makes every effort to effectively handle incidents of domestic violence, while examining the measures and actions that can be taken to prevent and address this phenomenon, based on the emerging needs and the special conditions that have been occurred.

d. Finally, the Department for Combating of Domestic Violence draws statistics on the crime of domestic violence, from the computer application of the Hellenic Police “Important Reports”.

Relevant material for all the above:

- [GSFPGE 1st Report on violence against women](#)
- [Bimonthly Report Newsletter #1: Policies and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E for the Prevention and Response to Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, during the Movement Restriction Due to the Pandemic of the COVID-19 in Greece.](#)
- [Analysis of Gender-Based Violence Data from the Network of Structures and the SOS Hotline 15900 \(March 2020 -April 2020\)](#)
- [Bimonthly Report Newsletter #2: Policies and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E for the Prevention and Response to Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, During the Lifting of Movement Restriction Due to the Pandemic of the COVID-19 in Greece.](#)
- [Analysis of Gender-Based Violence Data from the Network of Structures and the SOS Hotline 15900 \(May 2020 -June 2020\)](#)

Last but not least, **the GSFPGE has ensured the funding extension of the Network of Structures (Counselling Centres, Safe Shelters and the 24/7 SOS Helpline 15900) through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the years 2021-2023**, aiming to smooth continuation of specialised services for women survivors and their children in need and strengthen the broader networking with local institutions and civil society organisations for the prevention and response to GBV in Greece.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

Another issue, key priority for Greece and strategic goal of the current and the next National Action Plan on Gender Equality, is the protection of human rights, with emphasis on vulnerable social groups such as migrant and refugee women and their children. Trying to respond to the huge humanitarian crisis deriving both from the economic and refugee crisis in Greece, the GSFPGE created a partnership between public stakeholders and NGOs to contribute to the needs of refugee women and their children.

This partnership ended up to the signing of a Protocol of co-operation aiming at the co-ordination of all competent entities for the identification, referral, accommodation and provision of counselling services to refugee women, victims or potential victims of violence and their children, with regard their special needs (disability issues included).⁶⁶ The provision of services to refugee women, victims or potential victims of violence and their children, is made through the National Network of Structures for the Prevention and Combating of Violence Against Women mentioned above under section 2 (42 Counselling Centres, 20 Shelters, 24-hour SOS 15900 helpline). The Protocol of co-operation includes, among others, collaboration with the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government in order to keep and update a database for refugee women, victims or potential victims of violence and their children, who are hosted by the Network's structures, and co-operation with international institutions, international or national civil society organisations for the implementation of European or national projects and interventions in favour of refugee women. Apart from this, the GSFPGE has a long-term co-operation (Memorandum of co-operation) and undertakes joint actions with the UNHCR/United Nations Refugee Agency in Greece for the protection, temporary accommodation, provision of information and support to refugee women in danger and their children, victims of violence or multiple discrimination (disabled women and girls included).

During the current pandemic, the GSFPGE continued to offer the services of the Network of Structures for the Prevention and Combating of Violence Against Women to all refugee and migrant women and their children.

⁶⁶ Please see the English version of the Protocol here <http://www.isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Protocol-on-co-operation-for-Refugee-Women.pdf>

5.5 Other pertinent developments

The following two projects in which the GSFPGE participated as partner, were completed in Autumn 2020:

1. The SURVIVOR programme: “Reinforcing services for refugees and migrant victims of gender violence”, co-funded by the European Union under the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme REC-RDAP-GBV- AG-2017), with KETHI partners, the Centre for Women's Studies and Research, and the International Rescue Board (IRC Hellas).

This project started on 3 September 2018 and ended September 2020 with 712.174,00 € budget. The website is <https://www.gbvsurvivor.gr/>.

The outcomes of the project include: the recruitment of 4 women mediators-interpreters for the SOS15900 helpline and the Network of Structures, the training of KETHI intercultural mediators, the training of public sector professionals and of the Network staff, the creation of an implementation guide, the training of professionals deriving from different services of the public sector related to the refugee issues as well as members of the Network of Structures, training seminars at the Police Academy and at the Department of Social Work of the University of Western Attica, the training of professionals from NGOs active in the field of refugees, the creation of a tool for the public sector referral process, awareness-raising actions, including the organisation of 8 regional meetings with the local government to inform and raise awareness of relevant professionals, with regard to the revised co-operation protocol.

Until now, the following actions have been implemented:

- Translation of the Project's Grant Agreement.
- Establishment of the project's brand identity and printing of awareness raising material.
- The contract for the provision of postal services within the project.
- The planning of an information brochure addressed to professionals in the field, to raise awareness and disseminate the results of the project's activities, translated into Greek and English.
- Also, the planning of a brochure in three languages of refugees-migrants in Greece (English, Arabic, Farsi) on Gender-based violence protection, rights and support services at local/national as well as European level. The brochure is addressed to migrant and refugee women, their families and their community.
- The translation of the texts of both the above brochures and the relevant sections of the WOMENSOS website in English, Arabic and French.
- Planning of the communication actions of the project.

Eight regional meetings are planned to be held in eight regions of the country, involving institutional bodies and representatives of the target group communities, to support, co-ordinate them and a final event in Athens.

Within the framework of the same programme, exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise has taken place within Europe, in order to strengthen programmes that combat gender-based violence at European level.

2. The “EMPOWER” programme, with partners from the Centre for European Constitutional Law -Tsatsos Foundation and the Doctors of the World. The programme concerns the “empowerment of professional and refugee communities for the detection, recording and prevention of sexual and sexist violence in Greece”. The project has two-year duration and has started on 1 January 2019 and ended October 2020. Its budget is 303.015,44 €. Work packages included: recording the

situation on gender-based violence in the refugee population, training field professionals (in refugee camps and urban area), awareness-raising actions, including five meetings to strengthen the refugee population throughout the region territory. In this context, the following actions have been approved and planned:

- Development and management of the Project website and logo.
- Creating and promoting newsletters/press releases.
- Brochure creation and printing - Translation and distribution of informational material.
- Participation in the organisation and implementation of discussion groups within refugee communities.
- Organisation of information/awareness raising events.

The project website with all the relevant material is <https://empowerref.gr/en/home/>

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

- The promotion of women in decision making processes and in public life in general has always been among the strategic priorities of Greece's National Action Plans for Gender Equality. After a long discussion both on a national but also on a European level, Greece has most recently introduced a Law (Law 4706/2020, Government Gazette A' 136/17.07.2020) dealing with corporate governance aiming at modernizing the internal structure of the listed companies with a view of strengthening their autonomy in order to meet modern Capital Markets' requirements. Article 3 par. 1 provides for the first time in Greece a **gender quota of at least 25% on listed company boards**. Therefore, the new Law envisages provisions regarding a more comprehensive gender representation in the Board of Directors, by introducing mandatory quotas and stipulates the company's obligation to set diverse criteria for the selection of its directors.
- On 18 September 2020, a new law on provisions in the field of sports was published in the Government Gazette (Law 4276, Nr of the Gazette 181/A/18-9-2020). **Special provision has been taken in favour of women's participation in decision making in sports clubs/associations.**

More specifically:

Article 2 is clearly stating that in relation to the composition of the management board of the sports clubs, the number of candidates from each gender/sex must be at least equal to the 1/3 of the number of the vacant seats for election, including the seat of the president/head of the management board.

So, Greece is included among the EU member states which follow the path of the positive measure of quota aiming at the increase of female participation in decision making.

- Finally, the GSFPGE, as the competent gender equality body and as integral part of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, participates in the drafting of a new Law adopting the recent EU Work-life Balance Directive (Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU), that aims at better supporting a work-life balance for parents and carers, encouraging a more equal sharing of parental leave between men and women, and addressing women's underrepresentation in the labour market. According to the Directive provisions, member states have three years to comply with the Directive.

6.2 Policy changes:

- The GSFPGE participates in the elaboration of the **National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security 2020-2024** under the guidance of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Action Plan is about to undergo a public consultation.
- In order to facilitate the working mother, the mother who wishes to re-enter the labour market and the Greek family in general, the new programme "**Neighbourhood Nannies**" **will be piloted in the coming months**, which will finance the care of children with development resources of the NSRF.

In particular, the programme mainly concerns the care of infants aged from six months to 2.5 years and provides financial relief to employees -mainly- parents, single parents, caregivers and generally the family horizontally for the care of their child or children, either in the family home or in the home of a caregiver. The method of implementation of the programme will emerge after a technical study of adaptation of good practices to the Greek data, taking into account the needs, shortcomings and dynamics of stakeholders at the local level, in order to ensure the quality of services provided and the safety of infants.

The programme was announced by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in co-operation with the Special Secretariat for Programme Management of the ERDF, CF and ECB of the Ministry of Development and Investment, which are responsible for planning and implementing the programme. which is co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the NSRF 2014-2020. It falls within the axis of action for the reconciliation of family and professional or personal life, which is one of the main objectives of the European Equality Strategy for the coming years. It will be implemented, initially at a pilot level, at the beginning of 2021 with the aim of its universal implementation in the new programming period 2021-2027.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

- In December 2019, the GSFPGE published an annual report on the progress of gender equality policies in Greece with reference year 2018, with an emphasis on gender equality in local government. Taking up after a previous relevant EU-funded project, the GSFPGE took upon the administrative and substantive responsibility of preparing and publishing these reports every year to the direction of monitoring and assessing the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020.

The report in Greek can be found on the GSFPGE [here](#).

- **The "Observatory on Gender Equality"**, set up in the GSFPGE, continues its operation as a mechanism to support Public Administration and Local Authorities to design, implement and evaluate policies concerning gender equality through detailed gender-segregated data on equality issues (statistics and surveys) deriving from the development and function of relevant tools. The structure of the Observatory is based on the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) thus touching upon gender mainstreaming promotion. So far it has prepared and issued 24 e-bulletins.

The GSGE's Observatory has an online portal "paratiritirio.isotita.gr" designed to include, analyse, process and diffuse statistical data and indicators on gender equality policies. E-bulletins on areas like Women in power and decision-making, Women in education, Women entrepreneurship, Female unemployment are available in English in the following link http://paratiritirio.isotita.gr/genqua_portal/en/index

- **The “PEGASUS: Addressing the Gender Pension in Greece” Project** is being implemented with the collaboration of the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (co-ordinator), the Research Centre for Gender Equality and the National Centre for Social Research. Its main objective is to reinforce existing knowledge on all dimensions of the gender pension gap in Greece in order to contribute to the development of policies and other initiatives that will effectively address gender gaps in pensions:
 - i. website of the project: http://sintaxi.isotita.gr/?page_id=70&lang=en ;
 - ii. information leaflet in English: <file:///C:/Users/USER/AppData/Local/Temp/Information-about-foreign-citizens-1.pdf>

The “PEGASUS” Project examines the issue of gender pension gap on a multifaceted basis, through the analysis of all its dimensions and the assessment of its impact on the living conditions of retired women. Developing substantiated and targeted policy proposals to address the problem is a key issue. It seeks a holistic approach, through the recording and analysis of the key factors leading to gender pension gap (such as gender inequalities, stereotypes, labour market segregation) and the development of awareness raising and co-operation actions with policy makers, social partners and academics, highlighting and addressing the phenomenon for the first time in Greece.

The highlight of the project is the **on-line pension calculator**, an app designed to help employees calculate their future pension roughly based on their current employment data and/or their estimates of their future employment. The “On-line Pension Calculator” is addressed to men and women and only takes into account the general pension eligibility and pension calculation rules and does not concern specific provisions for specific categories of insured persons. The assessment is based on the Law 4387/2016, it is indicative and under no circumstances is binding on the competent bodies for the award of pensions: http://sintaxi.isotita.gr/?page_id=245&lang=en .

- Under the 2019 Rights, Equality and Citizenship Work Programme, the GSFPGGE submitted as co-ordinator a proposal to the Commission titled “Promoting work-life balance in companies and a better sharing of care between men and women- - SHARE”, which was approved and started February 2020. The Project aims to contribute in tackling traditional gender family roles and promoting reconciliation of work and private life, emphasizing in companies’ working environments, by taking into consideration the relevant European and national priorities and by developing complimentary activities that approach the field in a multidimensional and multifaceted way. In general the Project’s main objectives include engaging companies to apply gender sensitive interventions for the reconciliation of work and private life, promoting knowledge sharing and contributing in the development of methodology for the establishment of companies’ Label on Gender Equality (process, criteria and evaluation), raising awareness on the importance of work-life balance with special focus in the role of men and highlighting the benefits arising from family friendly working conditions and work-life balance initiatives both for employers and employees. More specifically, the main objectives of the Project addressing the identified needs and gaps, are the following:
 - ✓ Development of a precise methodological process for the establishment of companies’ Label on Gender Equality in order to put into practice the relevant national priority set by the recent Law on substantive gender equality.
 - ✓ Capacity building for 125 company actors in order to provide the necessary know-how in designing and applying initiatives for work-life balance.
 - ✓ Raising awareness on the importance of work-life balance with special focus in the role of men and highlighting of the benefits arising from family friendly working conditions and work-life balance initiatives both for employers and employees. This objective meets the need of behavioural and social change regarding issues affected by deep-rooted social stereotypes and biases.
 - ✓ Promotion of work-life balance friendly working environments in order to enhance gender equality in Greek labour market via consultation and knowledge sharing.

The project's website is <https://share.isotita.gr/>

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Despite the work that is undertaken in order to achieve substantive gender equality, there are still issues that restrict our momentum to move forward. Stereotypes and persisting patriarchal perceptions of life issues are still obstructing the way, yet there are continuous efforts to eliminate them. Persisting stereotypes about the image of women in the media, in professional life and career opportunities, motherhood, increased presence of women in atypical work, vocational segregation, are few of the problems that still exist and need to be addressed.

Furthermore, during the economic and social crisis that our country had to endure followed now by the current health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, major setbacks have occurred, such as high female unemployment (yet less drastically increased due to the fact that more women had precarious jobs than men), more women in low paid, precarious work, shift in traditional gender roles. Adding the refugee population that our country had to receive and include into Greek society; we could say that multiple discrimination issues have arisen and need special attention.

There have also been no efforts to include the notions of gender budgeting and gender impact assessment in public policies (as tools for gender mainstreaming), even though the recent Law 4604/2019 provides for such obligations by the State. The bet is a gradual successful and efficient implementation of the law.

At the same time, unfortunately, Greece does not keep track of the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting).

The new under elaboration National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2021-2025 is being designed so us to help us work to that direction with policies aiming at promoting women's employment and their inclusion in the labour market, at improving their digital skills, at addressing work-life balance and breaking gender stereotypes.

HUNGARY

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.4 Research and awareness raising

From March 2020, provide information through flyers about signs of domestic violence and opportunities for seeking assistance. These flyers were received by employees of family services, general practitioners, health visitors, ombudsman offices and crisis ambulances, and given to victims personally, as well as disseminated online.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Supporting the victims of domestic violence during COVID-19 pandemic

The Government of Hungary had reconsidered the necessary measures and changes in the service scheme for victims of domestic violence. The operation of this service scheme was ensured during the state of emergency, with some changes in spring, and it is currently ensured throughout Hungary. The crisis centres and secret shelters were open to victims in severe crisis situations. The National Crisis Management and Information Telephone Service continued to be available 24/7 free of charge. Ambulances dealing with less severe cases of domestic violence started to operate online during the state of emergency during the spring.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Empowering Women in the Family and Society Action Plan 2021-2030

The Empowering Women in the Family and Society Action Plan 2021-2030 was elaborated by a working group of experts and NGOs were consulted. The Governmental Decision 1685/2020 accepting the Action Plan was published in the Hungarian Official Journal on 22 October 2020. The Action Plan covers the areas of better reconciliation of family life and work; empowering women in areas, where they are underrepresented; creating equal economic, health and social protection for women and men. Implementation Plans will be elaborated for 2-year periods, the first one was already accepted for 2021-2022.

6.2 Policy changes

Exemption from personal income tax for women with four or more children

From 1 January 2020, all women with at least four children are completely exempt from personal income tax (15% currently) until retirement. This exemption concerns income derived from labour income.

Introduction of childcare fee for grandparents

From 1 January 2020, non-retired grandparents are also eligible for childcare fees (GYED), if both parents are (or the single parent is) employed. The purpose of the programme is to encourage grandparents to become more involved in the raising of grandchildren, while supporting the work-life balance of the parents. Only one of the grandparents is allowed to apply, but the fee can be requested for more grandchildren as well.

Extension of degree holder's childcare fee

From 1 January 2020, those mothers (or fathers) are eligible for the degree holder's childcare fee, if they are having another child while receiving the benefit or within one year following the disbursement of the benefit.

Part time employment

From 2012, parents with young children until the age of 3 years are entitled to work part-time at their workplace, and from 2015, parents with at least three children can benefit from this option until the youngest child is 5 years of age. From 1 January 2020, the age limit for part-time employment was

raised to 4 years of age of the child, and to 6 years of age of the youngest child in the case of parents with three or more children.

Increasing the amount of infant care allowance

A crucial step of the Hungarian gender equality policy is that - according to a legislative amendment in December 2020 - the rate of the infant care allowance (allowance for mothers until 168 days after birth) will increase from the current 70% to 100% from 1 July 2021. The amount of the benefit will be 100% of the previous gross salary of the beneficiary. Working mothers are thus able to receive a higher amount of on their previous net earnings during maternity leave than their pre-child net pay.

Measures to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on women

The Hungarian Government has taken the responsible steps in order to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on the financial situation and the everyday lives of women, especially vulnerable groups of women. Women with young children could find themselves in an especially difficult situation due to the effects of COVID-19. They are supported by the Hungarian Government with the following measures:

Expanding the social protection of women

During the state of emergency (in spring 2020), the conditions for receiving benefits for families raising children had been facilitated by the government so that no one, including parents raising their children alone, were deprived of these benefits as a result of the changed circumstances. This way, the disbursement of family benefits was automatically prolonged. In cases of parents' entitlement to childcare fee (a benefit based on social security status), childcare allowance (a benefit provided on a subjective right) or child-raising support (a benefit for families with 3 or more children) expired during the state of emergency, his/her entitlement to the benefit was automatically prolonged and paid for the entire duration of the state of emergency. Grandparents did not lose their entitlement to the so-called 'grandparent's childcare fee' even if the parent or a third party took care of the child during the state of emergency. With these measures the preservation of jobs of parents was supported as well, because during the difficult economic situation in the period of state of emergency, they were allowed to stay on unpaid leave in cases where they received the childcare fee or the childcare allowance.

Parents raising a chronically ill child or a child with severe disability, got special support for this period as well. If a parent was entitled to a higher amount of family allowance and was eligible for childcare allowance until the child was 10 years of age, because of raising a chronically ill child or a child with severe disability, then there was no need for the necessary reviews to be done or the documentation to be sent until the end of the state of emergency. Entitlement to benefits in this case did not end until the last day of the second month following the end of the state of emergency.

Students continuing education in public primary or secondary education institutions or a vocational training establishment, were eligible for school support until the age of 20 – or in case of special education needs until the age of 23. They were receiving support not only until the end of school year 2019/2020, but until the end of state of emergency.

The aforementioned measures regarding the prolongation of entitlement to family benefits as well as the schooling support and the simplification of procedures for parents raising children with disabilities support first of all women, because in most of the cases women stay at home with their children after giving birth; they are the beneficiaries of family benefits and they are the ones who do the home care of chronically ill children or children with severe disabilities.

Improving childcare services

Women with young children could find themselves in an extremely difficult situation due to the crisis. Either working from home and taking care of their children at the same time or in case they needed to be present at the workplace, the daily care of their children should be maintained. The Hungarian Government provided support to these women with the on-call service of childcare, with the

introduction of workplace childcare services as well as the organisation of daycare and summer camps.

As a result of the pandemic, extraordinary breaks were ordered in many kindergartens and nurseries. It was mandatory for the mayors of the settlements and the capital districts to provide on-call service of childcare (five children/group) free of charge for children whose placement could not be solved otherwise. Child catering had to be provided for the entire duration of the on-call service. From 25 May 2020, nurseries and kindergartens were re-opened in the countryside, and from 2 June 2020, children were received in those in Budapest as well.

The so-called 'workplace childcare services' could be established by any employer, who needed to solve the daily care of the children of their employees not only for the period of state of emergency but until 31 August 2020. There was no operating licence needed for the establishment of workplace childcare services, it was enough to report it to the local authority/capital district authority and have permission to operate from the public health institution. Workplace childcare services were available for children between 20 weeks to 14 years of age, whose parents were working and who were healthy, and were not infectious. Services could be ensured for the period required by the parents to a maximum between 6 am and 6 pm in small groups (maximum 5 children/group). The state provided tax and contribution allowances for companies, firms and budgetary entities for the operation of childcare services between April and June 2020. The employer was eligible for tax allowance for the person employed for the tasks of workplace childcare services. Only the 4% health insurance contribution, but maximum HUF 7710 needed to be paid, there was no social contribution tax or vocational training levy payable.

In addition, according to the decision of the government, day care and summer camps could be organised from 16 June, in compliance with the valid epidemiological regulations.

Hungary considers it important not only during the epidemic to help working mothers to get back to the labour market. There are currently more than 51,000 nursery places, making care available to 18% of children under 3 years of age. In 2019, about 67% of the enrolled young children in the nurseries and mini nurseries received free institutional child catering, so the Hungarian Government could take even more burden off the shoulders of families. With the opening of nurseries, the number of locally provided services will also increase, which will significantly contribute to the increase of female employment, new jobs will be created, and disadvantaged children will have access to quality care as soon as possible.

Rewarding the endurance of women during the crisis

The Women for Hungary Club gives awards to women who were coping with the difficulties of COVID-19 crisis with their outstanding performance and endurance. The main prize is HUF 5 million and the work of women is acknowledged in four categories: health, social care, education and 'other'. Anybody could be proposed for the prize and there were altogether 500 nominees, out of whom 5 women were rewarded in each category. Besides the prize, companies made offers for holidays, cultural or sport programmes for women.

The founding member of the Women for Hungary Club is Minister Katalin Novák, who as a female minister has an important role in decision making regarding taking measures for the support of families and women.

Supporting female-dominant sectors

In the framework of the Economy Protection Action Plan among other crucial steps the sectors most affected by the virus and industries with extensive traditions in Hungary received extra funding such as tourism, creative industry, health industry and food industry had access to development grants and tax cuts, in addition to the availability of preferential loans and capital programmes. In case of these sectors, between March and June 2020, employers were exempt from public dues payable after the wage of employees and only in-kind health insurance contribution needed to be paid from among

the contributions payable after the wage of employees. The recognition of the extremely hard work of health-care personnel was absolutely necessary and they received a bonus allowance of HUF 500,000, as a show of appreciation. Around 160,000 employees are concerned, both women and men.

6.3 Institutional changes

The Working Group Responsible for the Elaboration of the Empowering Women in the Family and Society Action Plan 2021-2030 was established by the 7/2020. (II. 28.) Instruction of the Minister of Human Capacities. The working group will monitor the implementation of the Implementation Plans elaborated for 2-year periods.

ICELAND

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

Legislative changes

The Directorate of Equality is responsible for combating gender stereotypes and sexism. Adoption of new legislation further confirms administrative responsibilities of the directorate and the authority of the Gender Equality Complaints Committee, as well as simplifying the composition and mandate of the Gender Equality Council. From January 2021, Icelandic legislation on gender equality has been changed from the Act on the Equal Status and Equal Rights for Women and Men, No. 10/2008, to the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights Irrespective of Gender, No. 150/2020 and, pending official English translation; Act on the Administration of Matters Concerning Equality, No. 151/2020.

The Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights Irrespective of Gender specifies both rules and activities relating to harassment and sexual harassment. Employers, organisations, and educational institutions are required to make efforts to prevent bullying and sexual harassment through gender equality plans, monitored and collected by the Directorate of Equality. Public authorities and municipalities have a duty to engage actively in efforts to promote equality in all sectors of society.

The new legislation further amends chapters on the duties of employers, including obligations to implement equal pay systems according to requirements outlined in the Equal Wage Management Standard published by Icelandic Standards. In 2018, Iceland introduced the first policy in the world requiring companies and organisations with more than 25 employees to actively demonstrate that they pay women and men equally for a job of equal value. The policy is implemented through a standardised job evaluation tool and equal pay surveys. The aim of the Equal Pay Management System is to bring to light gender biases when giving monetary value to job descriptions and job titles. Together with mandatory gender equality plans the system's objective is to combat the effects of negative gender stereotypes in both public and private organisations.

Policy changes and projects

A national gender equality action programme is adopted by a parliamentary resolution every four years. Individual projects of the programme focus on combating sexism and gender stereotypes. The current programme, 2020-2023, is prepared, implemented, and monitored by all ministries of the Government Offices in Iceland, with primary responsibility for monitoring by the Prime Minister's Office.

The Ministry of Justice in co-operation with the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police is working on promoting equal representation of women and men within the police force. Priorities include securing sufficient time allotment to equal opportunities officers within police organisations. The project aims to respond to findings of a survey conducted by the police commissioner recording sexist attitudes as a contributing factor for organisational culture and gender segregation within the Icelandic police force.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs pursues a programme for getting men more involved in the debate and discussion on gender equality, focusing on combating sexism and promoting a critical stance towards gender stereotypes. The method uses workshops named "Barbershop events" to encourage men and boys to become engaged by better understanding how gender inequality limits the ability of individuals, businesses, and communities to reach full human, economic and social potential. The workshops explore basic terminology when discussing gender equality to increase the understanding of ways gender stereotypes harm individuals and society.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is making efforts to secure equal participation of boys and girls in social activities in all aspects of upper secondary schools. The efforts include special focus

in the inclusion of students with immigrant background and students with disabilities. Actions are formulated in collaboration with the Association of Icelandic Upper Secondary School Students.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

Programmes aimed at combating violence

Through a project detailed in the national gender equality action programme, work has begun implementing the provisions of the Istanbul Convention, outlined in article 10, on establishing national co-ordinating bodies. A national co-ordinating mechanism will be adopted applying best practices implemented by other countries of the Council of Europe. Co-ordination at the national level takes place primarily through inter-ministerial collaboration and among experts across government offices, while primary responsibility for establishing the institutional structures to co-ordinate measures addressing violence against women is placed at the Department for Gender Equality at the Prime Minister's Office.

In the wake of the #MeToo movement, an action group was established by the Ministry of Welfare, Department for Labour. The role of the action group is to follow up on measures aimed at preventing harassment, sexual and gender-based harassment and violence in the workplace. The action group will put forward measures for improvements and focus on such measures as training programmes for employees. One of the main objectives is to gather learning material on a website, providing free access to information on issues relating to gender-based violence. Survey data suggests that there remains a need to provide guidelines for working against bullying and harassment in the workplace.

A temporary action group on violence was appointed in May 2020 by the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Social Affairs and Children. The group was set up as part of the government's response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Foreseeing that in times of increased economic difficulty, violence is expected to increase, the government decided to take targeted action and raise awareness against violence, especially domestic violence and violence against children. Numerous measures put forward by the action group have been carried out. Special focus is set on supporting foreign women and women with an immigrant background, elderly, and disabled women. The action group was also tasked with following up on general measures related to education, services, and support for victims of violence in accordance with a parliamentary resolution on an action plan for measures against violence and its consequences, for the years 2019-2022, approved by parliament in the summer of 2019. The action group also works to secure commitment to the parliamentary resolution on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and harassment, together with a plan for the years 2021-2025.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

Legislative changes

Provisions have been added to the General Penal Code to protect individual's sexual autonomy. Changes to the penal code were put forward by the Minister of Justice in November 2020 and the proposal for amendments ratified by parliament in February 2021. The aim is to protect the right to security and personal liberty, human dignity, and sexual freedom of individuals. To this end, amendments to the General Penal Code were approved to clarify legal rights and promote better management of cases within the Icelandic Police and the Justice System.

A proposal for amendments ratified by parliament in February 2021 to amend the General Penal Code to further strengthen the protection of those who are subjected to stalking, not least women and children. The amendments impose a special penalty provision on harassment and stalking. The provisions were put forward by the Minister for Justice. Penalties of this kind are in line with the objectives of the Istanbul Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. They are an addition to provisions on restraining orders and expulsion of perpetrators from homes, following reported incidences of abuse. Bearing in mind the reality that

harassment is more common against women than men, the stated intention of these measures is to increase the protection of women and promote gender equality.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

The Directorate of Equality is tasked, in accordance with the action programme on regional development, with the objective of increasing the participation of women in municipal councils. Work is under way to administer an awareness raising programme before municipal elections in the year 2022. The findings of research on the work environment for municipal councillors will be utilised to highlight the importance of taking into consideration different priorities of men and women when organising meeting schedules and planning events. The project is organised in collaboration with Icelandic Association of Local Authorities and the Ministry of Transport and Local Government.

When appointing committees, councils, and boards on behalf of the state and municipalities, care shall be taken to ensure that the proportion of women and men is as equal as possible and not less than 40% when there are more than three appointees. This also applies to the boards of public companies and companies in which the state or municipality is the main owner. The Directorate of Equality publishes yearly reports on the gender balance in appointed workgroups, committees and boards appointed by the ministries and monitors appointments to municipal committees following municipalities elections.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

Work is being carried out by the Department of Equality at the Prime Minister's Office on the preparation of a comprehensive four-year plan for the integration of gender mainstreaming. The objective is that equality perspectives will be integrated in policy and decision making by all ministries and public organisations. The plan considers gender mainstreaming projects that have already been carried out in ministries and government agencies, in particular projects relating to gender equality assessment of legislation and projects relating to the Public Finance Act, No. 123/2015. Included in this work is the development of guidelines and templates for all those responsible for developing public policy. The implementation of the project is in line with objectives on gender budgeting for the period 2020–2023. The plan includes:

- Proposals for implementation of gender mainstreaming in activities and policies of ministries and government agencies, in particular statutory action plans and planning of ministries and government agencies.
- Proposals on how to better utilise gender mainstreaming methodology in the drafting of bills and policy making.
- Mapping and proposals for improving the use of sex-disaggregated information and data, as well as the utilisation of research, in support of policies and decisions that consider gender perspectives.
- Suggestions for education and training.
- Proposals for pilot projects in each ministry and then as part of regular activities and procedures thereafter.
- Suggestions for increased quality of monitoring and follow-up of projects.
- Proposals for regular consultation and co-operation of those who play a key role in the field of gender mainstreaming.

The Directorate of Equality, responsible for monitoring the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights Irrespective of Gender, No. 150/2020, calls for reports from municipalities and public organisations about commitment to securing gender perspectives in policy development and planning. Gender

mainstreaming seminars are given by the directorate, increasingly through online sessions, tailored to various needs, specialisation of organisations and types of services provided. Municipalities must also include in their gender equality plans and reporting to the Directorate of Equality, reports of how they mainstream gender perspective into their services and policy.

Gender mainstreaming shall be observed in all policy making and planning in the work of schools and educational institutions, including after-school activity centres, and in sports and leisure activities. At all levels of the educational system, pupils shall receive instruction on gender equality and gender issues, including instruction about gender stereotypes, gender-based choice of education and occupation.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

In Iceland there exists a general agreement about the importance of maintaining a dynamic multilevel approach to gender equality. Ranging from active implementation of objectives established in the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights Irrespective of Gender, No. 150/2020 and the commitment to securing the enforcement of the Act on the Administration of Matters Concerning Equality, No. 151/2020.

From 2019, the issues of gender equality have been placed, by administrative provisions, under the Prime Minister's Office. Simultaneously the Department of Equality was established as part of efforts to secure a commitment to mainstreaming gender by government.

Future challenges include continued development of monitoring procedures, strengthening the institutional capabilities of the public sector to mainstream gender perspectives in daily operations. This commitment is emphasised in many of the projects and plans discussed above.

IRELAND

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

On 14 July 2020, the Minister for Justice announced the government's proposal to increase paid Parent's Leave and Benefit to five weeks and extend the time during which it may be taken to two years following the birth of the child. The measure aims to support both parents to balance their caring responsibilities with employment.⁶⁷ From 1 September 2020, the unpaid parental leave entitlement for each eligible child was extended from 22 weeks to 26 weeks, under the provisions of the Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2019 phased in over a two-year period.⁶⁸

On 21 October 2020, the Dáil agreed to refer the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Bill 2017 to Committee Stage. The bill includes provision to outlaw image-based sexual abuse and to prevent the abusive sharing of intimate images online.⁶⁹

Misogyny and misandry are among the issues being considered in a review of the prohibition on hate speech and hate crime in Ireland. A commitment to introduce new hate crime legislation was included in the 2020 Programme for Government, revising and updating the Incitement to Hatred Act 1989 taking account of the public consultation which commenced in 2019. In addition to the consultation, comparative research on international best practice on hate crime legislation is also being carried out.⁷⁰

1.2 Policy changes

Following on from the *Framework for Consent in HEIs; Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive: Ending Sexual Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions*,⁷¹ introduced in April 2019, in August 2020 the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science wrote to the presidents of all publicly-funded higher education institutions (HEIs) requesting that all HEIs develop specific institutional action plans on tackling sexual violence and harassment. These actions plans were to be published by February 2021 and involve the implementation of systems that record the number of incidents of bullying, intimidation or harassment including sexual harassment reported in each HEI. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has oversight of the Framework for Consent in HEIs, and these statistics will be reported annually to the HEA once the HEI action plans are in place.⁷²

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has requested a survey to be undertaken on harassment, sexual harassment and bullying of both staff and students in the higher education institutions. The planning of this survey has commenced, and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) will be consulting with the HEIs and representative bodies, such as the Irish Universities Association and the Technological Higher Education Association in this regard.⁷³

⁶⁷ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000144>

⁶⁸

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/employment_rights_and_conditions/leave_and_holidays/parental_leave.html

⁶⁹ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/bills/bill/2017/63/>. The Bill has since been enacted and commenced in February 2021 (<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/706c9-minister-mcentee-marks-safer-internet-day-by-commencing-cocos-law/>).

⁷⁰ The review was ongoing in October 2020 but has since been published. <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/1a62c-minister-mcentee-launches-findings-of-public-consultation-on-hate-speech-and-hate-crime-and-commits-to-drafting-new-legislation/>

⁷¹ <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2019-press-releases/PR19-04-05.html>

⁷² <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2020-09-24/209/>

⁷³ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2020-09-24/209/>

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The new National Childcare Scheme, which aims to provide for quality, accessible, affordable childcare, opened for applications in October 2019 with payments flowing from November 2019. The measure aims to support working parents and is among the actions contributing to advancing socio-economic equality for women and girls under the National Strategy for Women and Girls.⁷⁴

The establishment and terms of reference of a Citizens' Assembly on gender equality were approved by both Houses of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) in July 2019. On 25 January 2020, the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality had its first meeting and invited submissions from the public. Its February 2020 meeting introduced the main issues around gender, gender norms and stereotypes, and the family. Meetings planned for March, April and May were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, before proceedings moved online in July. In October 2020, the assembly's discussions focused on women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership. The Assembly is now expected to conclude its work in mid-2021.⁷⁵

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

In October 2020, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) was designated as Ireland's independent National Rapporteur for Anti-Human Trafficking under Article 19 of the European Union (EU) Human Trafficking Directive, by regulation.⁷⁶

2.2 Policy changes

On 21 February 2020, a new and expanded Victims Charter and website were launched.⁷⁷ The Charter describes the criminal justice system from the perspective of a victim of crime, and sets out information on the services and supports to victims of crime offered by the state and voluntary groups, and how to get in touch with those services.

2.3 Institutional changes

In March 2020, a cross-agency working group led by the Department of Justice and Equality in collaboration with frontline services was set up to respond to the risk of increased incidence of domestic violence associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Its work concluded in April with the development of a cross-agency action plan which included an awareness campaign and increased resources for front-line services.⁷⁸

A new forum was established for victims and stakeholders in relation to human trafficking and met for the first time on 10 July 2020.⁷⁹

2.4 Research and awareness raising

On 15 April 2020, the "Still here" public awareness campaign⁸⁰ was launched to reassure victims of domestic violence in the context of COVID-19 measures that services are still available. The campaign is part of the cross-agency action plan developed by the Department of Justice and Equality in collaboration with frontline services.

⁷⁴ <https://www.ncs.gov.ie/en/>

⁷⁵ www.citizensassembly.ie

⁷⁶ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2020/si/432/made/en/print> and <https://www.ihrec.ie/commission-takes-on-new-role-as-irelands-national-rapporteur-on-the-trafficking-of-human-beings/>

⁷⁷ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000022>

⁷⁸ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000055>

⁷⁹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/4d124-statement-in-relation-to-the-trafficking-in-persons-report-2020/>

⁸⁰ <https://www.stillhere.ie/>

On 9 July 2020, the Minister for Justice announced terms of reference for the Review of Part 4 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, which criminalises the purchase of sexual services, and the appointment of an independent expert to conduct the review.⁸¹

On 30 July 2020, the Minister for Justice marked World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.⁸² She highlighted the work being done to implement the National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking.

On 12 October 2020, the Minister for Justice and International Organisation for Migration (IOM) launched an anti-human trafficking public awareness initiative, the “#Anyone can be exploited” campaign.⁸³

In October 2020, work commenced on the PROPEL project undertaken by the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) on behalf of its members, with funding from the Department of Education and Skills through the Higher Education Authority, in order to advance institutional plans to implement the National Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions.⁸⁴

2.5 Other pertinent developments

On 16 June 2020, Ireland submitted its follow-up report on its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports to CEDAW.⁸⁵

The O’Malley Working Group, appointed in August 2018, to review and report on the protections for vulnerable witnesses in the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences, submitted its report in August 2020. On 29 September 2020, the Minister for Justice announced completion of rollout of Garda Divisional Protective Services Units to assist such victims and witnesses. This was followed, on 28 October 2020, by publication of the action plan, ‘Supporting A Victim’s Journey: A Plan to Help Victims and Vulnerable Witnesses in Sexual Violence Cases’, and the Minister for Justice announced specialist training across the Justice Sector to better support victims in sexual violence cases.⁸⁶

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

In August 2020, the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 was enacted, which included provisions in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic for courts to conduct remote hearings in civil proceedings, and for remote submission of affidavits.

In September 2020, the Minister for Justice announced proposals for reform of the Family Justice System, with Government approval of the General Scheme of the Family Court Bill to provide for the establishment of a District Family Court, a Circuit Family Court and a Family High Court as divisions within the existing court structures.

⁸¹ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000140>

⁸² <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000158>

⁸³ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000234>

⁸⁴ The project report was subsequently published in March 2021, <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/0a946-minister-harris-welcomes-publication-of-thea-propel-project-report/>

⁸⁵ Ireland’s follow up report to CEDAW, June 2020, available at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fIRL%2fFCO%2f6-7&Lang=en

⁸⁶ http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/O'Malley_Report, <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000220>, and <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000250>.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.2 Policy changes

Local women's organisations affiliated with the National Collective of Community-based Women's Networks (NCCWN) established a local women's caucus in September 2019, the first structure of this kind at local level in Ireland, and the caucus was formally recognised by Limerick City and County Council in January 2020. As part of its responsibility for conducting elections and referendums and its overall strategy to overcome barriers and increase female participation in local government, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage is engaging with women's civil society organisations. During 2019 and 2020, the Department supported the National Women's Council of Ireland and the NCCWN to develop guidance on establishing local women's caucuses, and funded Women for Election.⁸⁷

4.3 Institutional changes

On 10 December 2019, the Balance for Better Business Review Group published its second report. The Review Group had been established in July 2018 to promote a more equal gender mix at the top levels of Irish business. In this report it announced progress had been made with ISEQ20 companies on average achieving the interim target of at least 25% female directors, and extended its gender targets to leadership teams and private companies. On 4 March 2020, the Review Group published updated statistics showing the gender balance among directors of ISEQ20 companies continued to improve, and this group were narrowing the gap with their EU peers. However, the number of female executive directors and senior female board positions still represented a challenge.⁸⁸

4.4 Research and awareness raising

In November 2019, the findings were published of a research study, funded by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and carried out by Maynooth University on behalf of the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), on "Beyond the Dáil: More Women in Local Government".

Also, in November 2019, the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation hosted the "Constance Markievicz Conference: Celebrating Women Leaders in Ireland" and launched a new postgraduate scholarship that will fund research to aid the development of policies to support the next generation of women leaders.⁸⁹

4.5 Other pertinent developments

In July 2020, the first female president of a university in Ireland was appointed. In September 2020, the first female Secretary General (the senior civil servant and non-political head of the Department) was appointed to the Department of Justice.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

An Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process was established in October 2019, chaired by Dr Catherine Day, former Secretary General of the European Commission. The Advisory Group's report was published on 21 October 2020, with a commitment from Government that its recommendations would be assessed and would inform the development of a White Paper outlining options for a replacement of the Direct Provision system for accommodation of asylum seekers. The report included specific

⁸⁷ The NWCI/NCCWN projects were in progress as of October 2020 and subsequently published in Q1 2021. Details at <https://www.nwci.ie/learn/publications>

⁸⁸ <https://www.betterbalance.ie/>

⁸⁹ <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2019/November/2019112019.html>

recommendations in respect of the conduct of vulnerability assessments and the provision of appropriate accommodation, supports and services for people identified as victims of trafficking and sexual or gender-based violence, and advises that gender sensitivity and gender awareness should be guiding principles when designing and implementing reception arrangements.⁹⁰

5.5 Other pertinent developments

Implementation commenced in 2019 of Ireland's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019-2024, launched on 21 June 2019, which includes actions aiming to address the information and support needs of vulnerable female immigrants/refugees and asylum seekers.⁹¹

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

In 2019, the OECD was commissioned to review Ireland's approach to equality budgeting, and its report and recommendations were published in October.⁹² This work was undertaken to both accelerate the uptake and impact of the initiative, and to take account of developments in international good practice. An Equality Data audit was conducted by the CSO and the results published on their website in October 2020.⁹³

Work is also underway to progress a commitment given in the 2020 Programme for Government regarding the introduction of a Wellbeing Framework.⁹⁴

6.3 Institutional changes

On 26 September 2019, the establishment of a new Women's Health Taskforce⁹⁵ was announced by the Minister for Health to improve women's health outcomes and experiences of healthcare, building on recent progress in women's health, and following a recommendation in 2018 from the Scoping Inquiry into the Cervical Check Screening Programme⁹⁶ that women's health issues be given more consistent, expert and committed attention. Coinciding with the launch, the National Women's Council of Ireland published an evidence base on women's health that presents the available data.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Over the past year, where inter-institutional co-ordination and co-operation structures and protocols had been put in place to tackle specific gender equality issues, Ireland was better placed to respond to the increased pressures that arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the strategies, action plans and stakeholder relationships across the public sector and civil society, already in place for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention supported a rapid, flexible and sustained response to the increased risk of domestic violence. The process produced innovations such as Operation Faoiseamh in which An Garda Síochána (Ireland's police force) made contact with known victims of domestic violence to offer support and address any issues arising.⁹⁷ Stakeholder partnerships with an equality focus already in place in the education sector and in health have raised gender equality issues in the response.

⁹⁰ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/634ad-report-of-the-advisory-group-on-the-provision-of-support-including-accommodation-to-persons-in-the-international-protection-process/> The White Paper has been published in the period since October 2020.

⁹¹ <https://dfa.ie/our-role-policies/international-priorities/peace-and-security/women-peace-and-security/>

⁹² [http://budget.gov.ie/Budgets/2020/Documents/Budget/OECD Scan Equality Budgeting in Ireland.pdf](http://budget.gov.ie/Budgets/2020/Documents/Budget/OECD%20Scan%20Equality%20Budgeting%20in%20Ireland.pdf)

⁹³ <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/methodologicalresearch/rp-eda/equalitydataaudit2020/>

⁹⁴

<http://budget.gov.ie/Budgets/2021/Documents/Budget/Wellbeing%20and%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Broader%20Living%20Standards%20in%20Ireland.pdf>

⁹⁵ <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/-womens-health/>

⁹⁶ <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/030b53-scoping-inquiry-into-the-cervicalcheck-screening-programme/>

⁹⁷ <https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/our-departments/office-of-corporate-communications/press-releases/2020/june/operation%20faoiseamh%20-%20domestic%20abuse%209th%20june%202020.html>

The pandemic has also exposed the interdependencies between being economically active and availability of caring supports, and the extent to which assumptions about responsibility for these roles impact differently on work-life balance for women and men. These involve fundamental matters about the organisation of society which were already being examined in Ireland by the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality. Political support has been a key factor in advancing equality mainstreaming and budgeting in Ireland in the period since 2018. The need for COVID-response and recovery planning to be gender sensitive has been highlighted internationally in forums such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the EU. As the pandemic has drawn attention to existing inequalities in society, it has also highlighted the need for data disaggregated by equality grounds and for skills in equality impact assessment and mainstreaming.

9. Mid-term review of the Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2020)

A set of complementary initiatives have contributed to significant improvements in regard to gender equality and addressing gender-based violence in the third level education sector in Ireland. The Athena SWAN Charter launched in Ireland in 2015 in a context where males held 81% of professorial positions and 72% of the highest paid non-academic roles. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions was published in 2016, and was followed by the Gender Equality Taskforce which developed the Gender Action Plan 2018-2020 for Accelerating Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions. A Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality was established in the HEA in June 2019 to ensure sustainable acceleration towards gender equality in Irish HEIs by providing centralised support for the institutions, sharing of good practice, and funding for innovative organisational and cultural change initiatives nationally. On 15 June 2020, the HEA National Committee for Gender Equality drew on good practices identified to date for its statement on the COVID-19 pandemic. Referring to the risk of erosion in the gains made in recent years towards gender equality in Irish higher education, the Committee made recommendations for policies and practices to address this risk.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/07/Statement-on-the-COVID-19-pandemic-and-gender-equality-in-Irish-higher-education-1.pdf>

ITALY

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Within the Italian legislative framework, a set of ad hoc measures have been adopted to counter specific forms of racial discrimination, intolerance and xenophobic attitudes. Assumed that, in compliance with Legislative Decree No. 7 of 1 January 2016, the public insult has been repealed, offences such as defamation and menace – to be considered as conducts intentionally based on discriminatory grounds or ethnic, national, racial or religious hate – could amount to an aggravating circumstance so far avoiding a half increased basic sanction, the nullification of applicable mitigating circumstances, and ensuring in all cases ex officio prosecution.

1.2 Policy changes

The Italian Government is committed to the implementation of concrete actions in order to strengthen rights and promote gender equality, so that women have greater access to the labour market, social and political life and decision-making positions. Italy is strongly engaged in promoting actions aimed at redesigning the organisation of work and experimenting with forms of agile work that do not penalise women's career paths and that allow them to reconcile work and family life. These activities are part of the normative-defining context outlined both by Law No. 81/2017, which defines and regulates agile work in the public and private sectors, and by Law No. 124/2015, which reorganises the public administration. A specific action of support system for public administrations in experimenting with innovative measures for the reconciliation of personal and family life is also provided for in the 2014/2020 Community Programme.

Just to mention a best practice, within the EU project CLEAR the Department for Equal Opportunities is responsible for the implementation of the strategy for networking, dissemination, and public communication about Economic Financial Literacy. The project's aim is to increase female knowledge on the long term effects of labour market participation gaps over the life cycle. Several actions are instrumental to this purpose:

- evaluate with rigorous and scientific methods whether information and advice provided to women affect their knowledge, behaviour and decisions;
- analyse which type of information has the higher probability to be effective, in order to reduce the gender pension gaps.

A better information on how working choices affect pension benefits, will increase women's propensity to contribute to the social security system, thus contributing to its sustainability. Economic Financial Literacy and wealth management are core basic skills key to achieve an active citizenship, to improve financial well-being and prevent low income groups from having inadequate pension at older ages.

Within the reflection launched during the COVID-19 period, carried out by an ad hoc Task Force – "Women for a New Renaissance" – established by the Italian Ministry for Equal Opportunities and the Family and aimed at collecting gender data and making proposals for the empowerment of women and gender equality in the post-pandemic, it is a matter of fact that data on women's position at work impact on relationships within the family. If women earn less than men, if they have fewer career opportunities and are employed in lower paid jobs, they become the weaker and more expendable person in the couple. Smart-working could help to rebalance roles: according to the results of a research by Angelici and Profeta (2020) carried out before the pandemic, workers who benefit from one day a week of flexibility are more productive, more satisfied (the increase in satisfaction with their lives in general is about 29%) and better balance between work and family. In particular, men spend 51% more time at home. These new forms of labour, combined with appropriate technology, if applied correctly can help to reduce the differences in roles between men and women within the family, which are reflected in the labour market. But their unplanned and large-scale use, without an appropriate

alternation between remote and on-site work, may not have the desired results. Henceforth, regarding the goal to ‘Strengthening women’s work in companies’, among the key proposals, the following one has been formulated: “Stimulating the work of mothers, being this a category most at risk in the labour market, in general and in particular in the immediate post-COVID phase, with urgent and medium-term interventions concerning the education system and work organisation”; meanwhile for ‘Training new digital skills’, the need for “Reducing the Digital Gender Gap through the acquisition of skills (Digital Re-skilling), favouring lifelong learning on e-learning mode (also in companies) with specific programmes for women who risk being excluded from digital innovation or to favour their entry into the labour market, with particular attention to women with disabilities” is expressed.

1.3 Institutional changes

Article 26 of Legislative Decree No. 198/2006 was amended in 2017 by Article 1, paragraph 218 lett. b) of the Law No. 205/2017, comparing harassment and sexual harassment to discrimination. In this way, it is possible now for every worker who may be in that situation, to make a claim to the local Equality Councillor. Equality Councillors for equal opportunities at work act as public officers under Articles 12-20 of Legislative Decree No. 198/2006, as amended, and their tasks are the detection of gender discrimination in the workplace, during the phases of entering, career, training, salaries, dismissals and pensions. They can act for promoting the anti-discrimination principle in active policies, positives actions and any other useful initiative at this regard. Furthermore, Articles 36-37 attribute them, as public officers, the legitimacy to appear before a judge, or in conciliation out-of-court, when directly charged by the worker for discrimination cases in the workplace. Equality Councillors work together with labour inspectors at all levels of local administration, and a memorandum of understanding between the Councillor and the Inspection service at all administrative levels, national and local regulates their co-operation. Equality Councillors act on charge of the workers, directly in the place where the job place is situated, as they are established at all administrative levels, regional, provincial and national.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Specific action was devoted to preventing and combating gender-based violence, by implementing specific own strategies, in line with the principles set by the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and in the wake of the system of governance envisaged by the programming national measures against violence.

Always considered of fundamental importance for an effective contrast of the criminal phenomena that revolve around gender-based violence, inter-institutional collaboration has been encouraged in order to intervene in wide-ranging sectors, thanks to the collaboration agreements between the Department for Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of the Interior. In this regard, on 25 November 2016, the “Memorandum of understanding for the prevention and combating of gender-based violence” was signed and later completed by the Agreement, signed on 27 December 2017, aimed at the dissemination of listening-related settings (currently, protected listening rooms are available in 43 Police Headquarters), so as to create listening modalities of vulnerable victims as homogeneous as possible, on the national territory. In addition, initiatives are planned to develop training programmes for Police officers and the dissemination of risk assessment methods. This programme ended in 2019.

Furthermore countering sexism, gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination requires the adoption of a comprehensive methodology for data collection on gender-based violence: this challenge has been faced through a MoU signed by the Department for Equal Opportunities and the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT): indeed ISTAT has been engaged in measuring violence against women since long time. The first survey completely and explicitly dedicated – named survey on women safety – was carried out in 2006 while the second edition was carried out in 2014. The survey was funded by the Department of Equal Opportunity and was the result of the active collaboration of the specialist support services and the contribution of some survivors of violence. For the first time ISTAT survey made possible to describe the prevalence of physical, sexual and psychological violence and who are the perpetrators of such crimes. Information essential for policies aimed at preventing and addressing

violence against women was made available: the dynamics of violence, the places where it occurs, its severity and consequences, the huge amount of crimes that are not reported to the police.

The partnership has been renewed during the COVID-19 pandemic when ISTAT carried out an analysis of the data contained in the dataset of the helpline 1522 in the period between March and June 2020. Following a suggestion provided at international level, the information collected by the Italian helpline promoted and managed by the Department of Equal Opportunity of Presidency of Council of Ministers against violence and stalking, can provide some evidence on the domestic violence's trend during the pandemic period. In the absence of an updated statistical study carried out in real time, in fact, the analysis of data from calls to 1522, especially if compared with the same period of previous years, can provide useful indications on the evolution of the phenomenon during the lockdown, especially on the trend of requests for help. The awareness campaigns promoted by the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers on television channels and relaunched on social media between the end of March and April have reinforced the message of the importance of the request for help to get out of the violence.

On a general note ISTAT also collects data on stereotypes about the traditional gender roles and the attitudes toward violence against women. So far, data and information provide institutions, associations and citizens with a reference framework useful to evaluate the extent of the phenomenon, to know the victims and authors' characteristics, to understand the roots and the contexts where these crimes grow up and they are tools to develop effective policies and actions.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The National Service Contract is an agreed text of a five-year term concerning the activities that the concessionary company must perform to fulfil the task of serving the public in the territory of the Italian Republic. In particular, RAI must ensure a public service offering based on the principles of impartiality, independence and pluralism, so that everyone can autonomously form opinions and ideas and participate actively and consciously in the life of the country, besides ensuring learning and development of the critical, civil and ethical sense of the national community, including when abroad, by respecting the law and information-related duties, the truth of the facts, and the right to be informed. Within the above framework, the Service Contract stipulates that RAI promotes, within its own television programming, a real and non-stereotypical depiction of the women's situation. In fact, RAI must ensure the spread, on any platform and by any broadcasting system, of the most comprehensive and pluralist representation of the roles that women play in society, as well as the elaboration of contents aimed at preventing and combating all forms of violence against women. As part of the activities implemented by RAI Corporation, the protection of fundamental rights and the dissemination of equal opportunities between genders guide the creation of editorial content. The attention RAI pays to women's depiction in its TV series is confirmed by the female roles represented.

Ultimately, RAI can be considered virtuous in its approach to the female role and to the fight against gender-based violence and domestic violence. It is also considered essential to continue to pay attention constantly to the consolidation of a specific corporate sensitivity with regard to the correct depiction of women and against any forms of discrimination and violence.

In 2016 the National Communications Authority (AGCOM) adopted Resolution No. 424/16/CONS, containing "Guidance on respect for human dignity and the principle of non-discrimination in information and entertainment programmes". By this measure AGCOM recalled the media services to ensure respect for fundamental human rights in the field of information and entertainment programmes, with specific regard to people at risk of discrimination in order to ensure respect for human dignity, human rights, and the principle of non-discrimination. This authority carries out intense supervisory and sanctioning-related activities in the field of protection of users, by initiating proceedings and imposing the relating sanctions in case of proven violations.

The Corecoms (the Regional Communication Committees) perform some AGCOM delegated functions within the decentralised communication system. Various Corecoms have promoted initiatives on

“Women and the Media”. For example, Corecom-Lazio and Corecom-Emilia Romagna issued official Protocols, on the correct and non-stereotyped representation of genders and standards of information, with full respect for women (Memorandum of Understanding “Women and the Media”, proposed by Corecom Emilia Romagna in 2014 and Memorandum of Understanding “Women and the Media in Lazio”, proposed by Corecom Lazio in 2016, respectively).

Pursuant to Article 1§16 of Law No. 107/2015 on “good schooling”, ad hoc National Guidelines (“Educating for respect: for gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination”) have been adopted in order to provide for implementation of principles of equal opportunities by means of promoting, within the school system, education on gender equality, gender violence prevention and countering discrimination as well as to provide schools with orientations and boost activities and initiatives to sensitise pupils and students on the above mentioned topics. In particular the specific “three-year Plan of the training offer ensures the implementation of equal opportunities principles promoted in schools of all levels of education for gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination, in order to inform and sensitise students, teachers and parents on the issues identified by Article 5, paragraph 2, of the Decree of 14 August 2013, n. 93, converted, with amendments, by law October 15”. The plan calls for concrete actions to be carried out over the course of three years, both in terms of information and awareness raising. Furthermore, the Italian Ministry of Education has launched a web portal on equal opportunities at school (<http://www.noisiamopari.it>), collecting experiences and good practices, with the support of experts and concerned associations. The web portal aims at strengthening the commitments of schools to develop social and personal identity of adolescents approaching to sexual orientation and interpersonal relationships, while countering each form of discrimination and assault against human dignity, homophobia and gender violence.

Within the sport system, the National Council of the Italian Olympic Committee established in April 2018 that from the succeeding mandate, in all federal councils, at least 30% female members must be guaranteed, in accordance with the Golfo-Mosca Law. Of the 4,708,741 athletes enrolled in the various sports federations, women are only 28%. Among sports operators there are even fewer: 19.8% of coaches, 15.4% of club managers and only 12.4% of Federation managers. The project Respect-Stop Violence Against Women, carried out by Censis with the contribution of the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, has promoted a collective reflection on the social value of women to promote a behavioural change preventing discrimination and gender-based violence. Starting in May 2019, an awareness campaign aimed at young people was launched on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and stands were set up in 20 sports events in Rome to deliver information material to over 2,000 young people.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Law No. 69 of 19 July 2019 has introduced a comprehensive reform on domestic and gender violence (so-called ‘Red Code’).

The text provides for a “fast track” to combat violence against women, with faster investigations. In addition, heavier penalties will be imposed in cases of sexual violence and stalking, and the crimes of facial scarring and forced marriages are introduced.

More in detail, as far reporting and investigation the judicial police will have to communicate to the magistrate the factuality of the crime of mistreatment, sexual violence, persecution and aggravated injuries occurred in the family or between cohabitants and the victim must be heard in the following three days from the crime report.

As for sexual violence, penalties will rise to 6-12 years; sexual acts with children under 14 years is an aggravating circumstance. In relation to stalking, the imprisonment of the offender goes from a minimum of one year to a maximum of six years and six months. For ill-treatment against family

members or cohabiting partners, imprisonment increases from the current 2-6 years to 3-7 years; the penalty is increased by half if the act occurs in the presence of or against a minor, a pregnant woman, a person with disabilities or if the aggression is armed.

The Criminal Code is also enriched with a provision on cases of aggression against a person causing permanent facial injuries. The perpetrator is liable to imprisonment for a period of between 8 and 14 years. If the scarring causes the death of the victim, life imprisonment is imposed and it will be harder for offenders to get benefits such as work outside prison, reward permits and alternative measures.

A stronger punishment is provided for anyone who induces another to marry (even with civil union) using violence, threats or taking advantage of a psycho-physical inferiority or for religious precepts. The penalty ranges from 1-5 years and it rises to 2-6 years if it involves a minor and is aggravated by half if it damages those who are under 14 years of age at the time of the act.

Within this legislative framework, the extension of the “qualified” category of dangerousness is necessary for the application of the Special Surveillance of Public Security, introducing the crime of “mistreatment in the family” among those covered by Article 4, letter i-ter of the Code of Anti-Mafia Laws (Legislative Decree no. 159/2011). For example, on 23 December 2019, the Court of Milan ordered the Special Public Security Surveillance for two years against a 39 year-old man who was convicted of serious crimes, including mistreatment of elderly parents in the family, at the request of the *Questore* of Milan. After being reported several times, the man was subject to the precautionary measure of removal from the family home and a ban on approaching the places frequented by the elderly parents. These measures were not enough to stop the aggressiveness of the person, who repeatedly violated them, thus being denounced and making it necessary to apply more incisive measures.

2.2 Policy changes

Since 2015, Italy has developed a strategic approach on violence against women and girls supported with adequate human and financial resources. The Extraordinary National Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence 2015-2017 established a multi-level governance framework of public policies for combating the phenomenon and supporting its victims. A systematic funding mechanism was created to sustain the work of new anti-violence centres and shelters all over the national territory and the strengthening of those already existing, through a total allocation of 10 million euros per year and, starting from 2018, of 30 million euros each year. So far, the number of shelters in Italy has increased from 163 in 2013 to 258 in 2017, as well as the number of anti-violence centres, which has grown from 188 in 2013 to 296 in 2017. To further strengthen and reaffirm its concrete commitment towards women, the Italian Government has worked on the elaboration of a new National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women for 2017-2020.

At the grassroots level the study of effective operational tools that allow the emergence of situations of violence in “first intervention” activities has been deepened, useful to give impetus to in-depth analysis aimed at preventing the escalation of violence, taking due account of the need for a correct approach of operators towards the victim.

A project was launched in September 2019, and is currently underway, with the aim of recognising the victim of violence already identified when police officers respond to a call to the emergency number 112. For this purpose, a specific platform is being tested. The expected results, in the medium and long term, are a more effective fight against recidivist behaviour and an increasing confidence, on the part of women, to turn to the police force to report incidents of violence.

In December 2019, the procedures described in the “processing card” of the intervention protocol for cases of domestic violence were updated and shared with the Police Headquarters, revised in the light of the changes made by Law No. 69/2019 (so-called ‘Red Code’).

Since 27 March 2020, within the overall framework of the strengthening of initiatives aimed at improving the prevention and fight against criminal phenomena affecting vulnerable victims, the YOUPOL IT application - already used since 2017 for bullying and drug trafficking - allows a direct request for assistance to the Police Headquarters' Operations Centres through the reporting of messages and images concerning episodes of gender-based violence. The YOUPOL APP is an alternative channel of communication to the traditional, indispensable emergency numbers. YOUPOL can be activated on smartphones, tablets and computers.

Within the framework of strategies for the prevention of violence and the protection of vulnerable victims in general, the application of the monitoring tools of the *Questore*, as the Provincial Public Security Authority, cannot be ignored.

In July 2020, the Central Anti-Crime Department published and disseminated to the Quaestors the updated edition of the "Guidelines on prevention measures", drawn up by the Central Anti-Crime Service, including warning signs, a monitoring measure applied by the Quaestor to protect victims of stalking and domestic violence, as well as minors over 14 years of age responsible for cyberbullying. The report aims to provide a valuable support tool especially for police officers working in the Police Anti-crime Divisions of the Police Headquarters. The guidelines take into account the most recent jurisprudential rulings and good practices, resulting from the operational experience gained over the years by Police Offices.

The warning - introduced by Law No. 38 of 2009 - is an important tool that allows the Police Commissioner to intervene in cases of stalking - at the request of a party - and for episodes of domestic violence - on his own initiative - in a rapid manner and with an alternative or parallel measure to the judicial route, and which allows him to intervene quickly to protect the victim who so requests, as an alternative to criminal proceedings.

It is important to note that in the case of both warnings for acts of persecution and domestic violence, the law stipulates that "the *Questore* shall take measures with regard to weapons and ammunition".

In addition to the obligation to inform the victim of the presence of the anti-violence centres and to put him/her in contact with them, both in the case of persecution and in the case of mistreatment in the family, the *Questore* also informs the person warned of the possibility of undergoing a prevention programme organised by the social welfare services in the area.

The Quaestors, following the indications provided by the Department, develop specific protocols of intervention and in agreement with local Administrations, Local Health Authorities, Provincial Schools, Anti-Violence Centres and Associations dealing with the protection of women and minors who are victims of violence.

On 13 December 2019, the Protocol of Collaboration (the so-called Zeus Protocol) between the Milan Police Headquarters and the Italian Centre for Promotion and Mediation (CIPM) was renewed. The application of the protocol has had a positive response: in 2019, almost 80% of the admonished persons accepted the invitation to report to the Mediation Centre and the Police Headquarters continues to carry out constant monitoring of the most problematic situations in order to avoid dangerous recurrences.

Other similar agreements have led the Police Headquarters of Viterbo, Pescara and L'Aquila, Modena, Oristano and Cagliari to suggest therapeutic paths to the subjects admonished by the relevant Quaestors.

The Central Anti-Crime Directorate participates in the European Project ENABLE - Early Network-based Action against abusive Behaviours to Leverage victim Empowerment, approved by the European

Commission on 17 July 2020 (Call REC-RDAP-GBV-AG-2020) in partnership with the Italian Centre for Promotion and Mediation (CIPM). The project, which is still in the start-up phase, is aimed at disseminating the methods of collaboration between the Police Headquarters and the Centres specialising in taking care of warned persons, already adopted in Milan (the so-called Zeus Protocol) and in other provinces.

The containment measures adopted by the Government due to the COVID-19 emergency have negatively affected the possibility for the Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Homes to take charge of and receive victims of domestic violence. The problem was represented by the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family to the Minister of the Interior, and was the subject of provisions by the Cabinet of the Minister of the Interior to the Prefects - dated 21 March 2020 - in order to verify its existence in individual territorial contexts and, if necessary, to identify alternative accommodation solutions for the victims.

Following the circular of the Minister of the Interior of 21 March 2020, the Central Anti-Crime Department, in turn, interested the Quaestors on the issue represented by the Minister, with a note dated 24 March 2020.

From the responses received, it emerged that the Quaestors took action to detect the difficulties related to the emergency encountered by the reception structures active in their territories, carrying out a direct reconnaissance, also for the purpose of collaboration initiatives with the Prefects.

In a number of territories, although no particular needs of the Centres emerged, constant institutional contacts with the heads of the structures have been ensured, so as to be able to intercept problems immediately and report them to the most appropriate offices. Preventive contacts with the Bodies in charge of identifying accommodation have been made, also in agreement with the Prefects.

2.3 Institutional changes

The National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women for 2017-2020 follows the so-called “4 Ps” of the Istanbul Convention: Prevention; Protection and Support; Prosecution and Punishing; Integrated Policies. This strategic document promotes a multilevel governance based on the interaction and responsibility of each central, regional and local administration. Two main bodies have been entrusted with the objective to draw up an operational plan of the above mentioned actions: a Control Room to define the governmental strategy; a technical committee for the preparation of operational plan proposals developed according to the directions of the Control Room. The operational Plan, being flexible and dynamic in nature indicates concrete actions to implement the objectives contained in the Strategic Plan. It also indicates the financial resources that the central and territorial Administrations have declared to allocate to this end, making them responsible in this context. It is on-going the assessment about the creation of new emergency facilities, the so-called safe houses, for the immediate and timely assistance for women victims of violence.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Within the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women for 2017-2020 and related operational Plan several research and analysis and dissemination actions have been implemented.

For example, the above mentioned memorandum of understanding signed by the Department for Equal Opportunities and ISTAT was signed; also, on the occasion of the International Day against male violence against women, it was launched a new relevant awareness-raising campaign, entitled #lapartitaditutti.

The information and awareness-raising campaign “This is not love”, launched in 2016, which has become a permanent initiative developed by the Police Headquarters since 2017, was also developed in 2019 and 2020. As part of the project, the Central Anti-Crime Directorate has produced the third edition of the brochure entitled “This is not love...” published on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2019, as foreseen in the framework

of the commitments of the Operational Plan of the “National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women” (2017/2020).

The 2019 edition of the brochure contains information on criminal phenomena related to gender-based violence - including feminicides - and useful tools to protect victims, with a focus on the prevention measures implemented by the Public Safety Authority. A leaflet translated into several languages (including Chinese) was also produced and distributed to the Police Headquarters through the Central Crime Service portal.

In view of the events planned for 2020, a bookmark dedicated to the campaign was created, containing emergency and public utility numbers and a flyer highlighting the tools for protecting vulnerable victims, to be distributed during events dedicated to the prevention of gender-based violence. In view of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2020, a new edition of the brochure “This is not love” has already been produced and will be distributed.

From July 2016 to February 2020, approximately 136,000 contacts were registered, with a peak of 17,432 (of which 3,931 minors) on 25 November 2019. The events scheduled for 14 February 2020 registered 9,100 contacts.

As far as training initiatives are concerned, in January 2020, in collaboration with the Central Directorate for Education Institutes, e-learning modules on gender-based violence were defined for the general updating of State Police personnel, currently available and usable on the SISFOR platform.

The Department of Public Security participates in the Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support (EStAR) Project, an initiative launched by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights - ODIHR in co-operation with the German VBRG - Association of Advice Centres for Victims of Right-Wing, Racist and Anti-Semitic Violence. The Project is supported by the European Commission and the German Government and will be developed over the next two years (until December 2021) with the participation of 41 OSCE member states.

The contact person for the Project is the Central Anti-Crime Directorate of the State Police, which participates with its expert. The project, in a nutshell, envisages: the establishment of a network of experts - for each country, civil society and institutions - in order to collect and exchange expertise and good practices on the protection of hate crime victims and to channel the Project's products and know-how into the respective countries; tools to develop the capacities of the actors of the criminal justice system in the protection of hate crime victims; tools to improve specialised services.

The opening webinar of the Project was held on 28 May 2020, while the first conference of the network of experts was held last September. In October 2020 a first report on the project was published, drawn up on the basis of the experts' contributions.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The Department for Equal Opportunities (DEO) at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers is responsible since 1997 for guidance, proposal and co-ordination of regulatory and administrative initiatives to support women's human rights; prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination, combat VAW, exploitation and THB, as well as all violations of the fundamental rights to the integrity of the person and health of women and girls.

In particular DEO is in charge for the promotion and the co-ordination of the legislative actions concerning the elaboration and implementation of gender policies, the acquisition and analysis of data and information about gender equality and equal opportunities, the proposal, definition, implementation and co-ordination jointly with other central Administrations and local authorities of interventions in the field of gender equality, the dialogue and co-operation with EU and international

systems and mechanisms on gender issues – i.e. United Nations, the European Union, OECD and, of course, the Council of Europe.

In recent times further working areas have been explored, where DEO has started to participate and contribute to the gender debates, such as the G7-20/WEF settings.

Moreover, comments were provided on Draft laws concerning Provisions on statistics on gender-based violence (AS 1762), in October 2020, and contributions on the Bill for the establishment of centres for abused men and provisions concerning the warning procedure by the *Questore*, with participation in a working table at the Senate of the Republic, in July 2020.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

In Italy in recent years there have been several legislative interventions aimed at ensuring effective prevention and repression of VAW and at promoting the spread of a cultural gender attitude and sensitiveness, including training addressed to justice operators, as well as ensuring the necessary resources to support and implement policies in this field.

In compliance with the Istanbul Convention, ratified in Italy on 27 June 2013, Law No. 69 of 19 July 2019 (“Amendments to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and other provisions on the protection of victims of domestic and gender violence”), known as the ‘Red Code’, has been adopted. This Law has strengthened the protection of victims of gender-based violence. In particular, it has introduced procedural ways to ensure the immediate opening and development of criminal proceedings in order to achieve, where necessary and in a very timely manner, the adoption of "protective or non-approach" measures to prevent unjustifiable procedural inaction from further endangering the life and physical safety of victims of domestic and gender-based violence.

Article 347 of the Code of Criminal Procedure on the obligation of judicial police to report orally to Public Prosecutors news of crime acquired has been integrated and its application has been extended to crimes of mistreatment, sexual violence, persecution and aggravated injury, as perpetrated in family contexts or in cohabitation relationships. By imposing the immediate communication of the news of crime, in fact, an absolute presumption of urgency has been introduced with respect to criminal phenomena for which the useless passage of time can lead, and often leads, to an aggravation of harmful or dangerous consequences. Article 370 of the Code of Criminal Procedure has also been amended to the same purpose, with the introduction of paragraphs 2 bis and 2 ter, which require the judicial police to adopt a preferential channel in dealing with investigations delegated by Public Prosecutors concerning the offences of mistreatment, sexual violence, persecution and aggravated injury as perpetrated in family contexts or in cohabitation relationships.

Furthermore, to speeding up criminal proceedings Article 2 of Law No. 69/2019 added paragraph 1-ter to Article 362 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which provides that when proceedings are initiated for crimes related to gender-based violence, the Public Prosecutor must take basic information from the victim within three days. Henceforth, for the hearing of the victim to take place “without delay”, domestic legislation guarantees the right of the victim to be heard by judicial authorities and to avoid procedural inaction which would delay unreasonable triggering of interventions and to prevent the repetition of the conduct or aggravating the harmful or dangerous consequences of the offence, subject to exceptions.

A new crime has also been envisaged in Article 387 bis of the Criminal Code, punished with imprisonment from six months to three years, which aims at preventing the frequent violations of the prescriptions imposed by precautionary measures of removal from the family home and the prohibition of approaching places frequented by the injured party.

Moreover, Article 5 of Law No. 69/2019 provides for compulsory training released by the State Police, Carabinieri Corps and the Prison Police Corps for public security or judicial and prison police staff in relation to the prevention and prosecution of gender-based violence crimes. The main scope is to provide for high qualified and specialised knowledge to deal with cases of domestic and gender-based violence. In this context several bills are under parliamentary debate: S 269 - "Introduction of education about gender differences in teaching activities in the national education system and in universities" (12 April 2018); S 215 – "Introduction of socio-affective education, respect for gender differences and equal opportunities in the educational activities of schools in the national education system" (4 August 2018).

Finally, with regard to opening and functioning of anti-violence centres and related amendments to the Criminal Code in order to include the concept of discrimination on grounds of gender in compliance with Article 3 of the Constitution, the following bills have been presented: No. 2171/C – "Amendments to Articles 604 bis and 604 ter of the Criminal Code and the establishment of the National Day against homophobia and anti-violence centres for victims of homophobia and transphobia"; No. 1176/S – "Amendments to Articles 604a and 604b of the Criminal Code and establishment of the National Day against homo-transphobia and anti-violence centres for victims of homophobia and transphobia".

As far as data collection and statistical analysis, it should be noted that a bill was approved on 25 November 2020 (No. 1762), which aims to ensure an adequate and regular flow of information on violence against women: it is essential to design appropriate policies for prevention and contrast it and to ensure effective monitoring of the phenomenon.

By decree of the Ministry of the Interior of 22 November 2019 (published in the Official Gazette of 23 January 2020, No. 18) - within the framework provided by Directive 2004/80/EC on compensation to crime victims - amounts for compensation to victims of violent intentional crimes were established.

The Budget Law for 2020 (Law No. 160 of 27 December 2019 – Article 1, paragraphs 348-352) has provided for the obligation to display a sign reporting the toll-free number to support victims of violence and stalking on the premises of public administrations where direct services are provided to users, in public offices, local health units and pharmacies.

At its session on 4 March 2020, the Italian Parliament examined and approved two motions concerning initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and preventing and combating violence against women (with the triple aim of preventing crimes, punishing perpetrators and protecting victims).

3.2 Policy changes

Data collection concerning women's access to justice is carried out by the Ministry of Justice in partnership with ISTAT, as follows. Violenceagainstwomen.Stat is the data warehouse that collects and organises statistics on violence against women produced by ISTAT in order to make them easily accessible to the different types of users (researchers, policy makers, journalists, citizens). Data are collected by using administrative sources and sample surveys. The topics addressed cover several themes including the diffusion of the phenomenon, its characteristics and the paths away from violence. Data are organised in a homogeneous and coherent way and they are updated regularly. In particular, data on investigation, prosecutions and convictions are managed in the data warehouse, including police reporting, prosecutions in the prosecutor offices and final sentences.

Moreover, please refer to the memorandum of understanding signed by the Department for Equal Opportunities and ISTAT, above reported.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning the launch by the Tivoli Public Prosecutor's Office of the second report on the implementation of Law No. 69/2019 (the so-called Red Code) in the relevant district, concerning the period 9 August 2019 to 8 August 2020. Significantly - in view of policy change - the report notes that positive actions in place in the last four years in the fight against crimes of gender-based violence have minimised criticalities about the implementation of the law, above all, it is

highlighted that the main objective pursued has been and is to “apply the new law in a non-formal nor bureaucratic way” but respecting “its ratio in the implementation of constitutional and conventional principles”.

3.3 Institutional changes

In Italy, women are present in every branch of the judiciary, primarily in the courthouses, and at every rank and function. In 1992, at the urging of the Italian Women Judges Association, the Equal Opportunities Committee was established at the High Council of the Judiciary (CSM). Its job is to identify the initiatives needed to eliminate *de facto* inequality, doing away with work conditions that produce different effects based on a person’s sex, and to foster a better balance between professional responsibilities and home care demands. In 2008 Equal Opportunities Committees were established at various Appeals Courts, with proactive and advisory duties on the subjects of judicial work organisation and gender protection. In April 2014, the Committee proposed an amendment to the law governing the election of members of the CSM, setting quotas that would guarantee a sufficient presence of women in this important body.

In this regard it should be noted that, in accordance with Article 29 of the Statute of the National Association of Magistrates - which regulates the operations of the Central Electoral Office for elections to the Central Steering Committee - when distributing available seats among the various competing lists in proportion to the votes cast by each list, seats are allocated for “candidates who have obtained the highest number of votes (list votes plus preference votes)”, plus a mechanism by which the candidates of each gender who have obtained the highest number of votes are in any case elected to the extent of 30%.

Significantly, on the occasion of the last elections which took place on 18-20 October 2020, the Central Electoral Office adopted a new interpretation of the above rule beyond the approximate criterion for the distribution of seats among the candidates on each list: it considered the percentage (30%) as the minimum one for each gender.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Numerous awareness-raising campaigns are carried out by DEO to overcome prejudices and stereotypes. With regard to the VAW Plan, relevant training related initiatives included: a) Specific courses for law enforcement, by behavioural and organisational models already tested on the territory (Prosecutor’s Office of the municipality of Cosenza; the Police Headquarters in Catania and Verona) through ad hoc Protocols, namely S.A.R.A. (“Spousal Assault Risk Assessment”), S.I.L.V.A. (“Stalking Victims and Risk Assessment”) and E.V.A. (“Examination of Violent Acts); b) Relevant awareness raising campaigns for the whole judiciary (DEO and the Ministry of Justice); c) Awareness raising for the Stalking Unit, under the MoU signed by the General Command of the Carabinieri Corps and DEO.

The report focusing on the implementation of the so-called Code Red in the last years has been released on 25 November 2020 by the Cabinet of the Minister of Justice. It has been drawn up on the basis of a collection of judicial data and practices covering the period December 201-June 2020, carried out by the Department for Justice Affairs and the General Directorate of Statistics of the Ministry of Justice. The research has been based upon the willingness to analyse the practical result of the legal reform, in order to proceed, in a timely and appropriate manner, to any possible improvement for its best implementation, and to ensure effectiveness of the legal instruments yet in force, especially in the field of access to justice.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

As part of its efforts to promote fundamental rights and freedoms, particular attention has been paid to interventions on equal access between women and men to elected offices, affecting electoral systems at different levels (national, regional, local and European Parliament).

Over the last few years, a number of actions have been taken at national level to improve gender equality in political decision-making. As a result of these measures, the number of women working in political institutions has increased considerably. This increase was confirmed by the recent elections of 4 March 2018. A total of 34% of new parliamentarians are women: this is the highest percentage in republican history. The current legislature sees more and more women elected, both in the parliament, with the peak of a trend that has lasted since the last ten, in which the representation of women in both Chambers has always grown. In percentage terms, the presence of women in the last ten years has increased from 17.2% to 34.62% of the current legislature. Among the legislative measures recently adopted by the Italian Government and aimed at improving the equal participation of women and men in political decision-making processes, the following ones are worth of mentioning: - Law No. 165 of 3 November 2017 on “Changes to the system of election of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate of the Republic. Delegates to the Government for the determination of uninominal and plurinominal constituencies”, which provides for a series of specific provisions on gender representation and establishes, among other things, the principle of gender alternation in the lists of candidates for each Plurinominal College for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic. The law also establishes that, within the Uninominal Colleges, neither sex can be represented to a greater extent than 60%. - Law No. 65 of 22 April 2014, which lays down provisions for the election of Members of the European Parliament, and in particular establishes the principle of an adequate composition of the lists of candidates, as well as of 'triple gender preference'. Under this law, the voter may express up to 3 preferences. In the case of multiple preference, the same preference must be given to candidates of a different sex, otherwise the third preference will be cancelled.

4.2 Policy changes

Law No. 56 of 7 April 2014 on “Provisions on metropolitan cities, provinces, unions and mergers of municipalities”, which establishes that in the junctions of municipalities with a population of more than 3,000 inhabitants, neither sex may be represented to an extent of less than 40%, with arithmetical rounding. Moreover, in the Italian legal system there are several national and regional laws aimed at promoting the participation of women in politics and access to elected offices, issued in compliance with Articles. 51, first paragraph, and 117, seventh paragraph of the Constitution. In particular, in the last legislatures, the Parliament has approved regulatory measures to promote gender balance within local, European and national elective assemblies (Law No. 215/2012 for municipal elections; Law No. 56/2014 for elections of metropolitan and provincial councils; Law No. 65/2014 for EU elections; Law No. 20/2016 for elections of regional councils; Law No. 165/2017 for elections to the Parliament). Promotional measures for equal opportunities have also been introduced in the most recent legislations concerning the discipline of political parties.

4.3 Institutional changes

Through a legislative provision which, since 2011, has introduced in Italy the obligation for companies to have a fair gender representation in the administrative and control bodies of companies, the percentage of women holding top positions in the economic sphere has significantly increased, reaching more than 33% in 2018 for listed companies, compared to 6% in existence before the introduction of the regulation. This increase was also evident for public companies where the percentage of women on boards is 32.1%.

The results, broking a glass ceiling that lasted for years, prove that the legislation is a useful tool with respect to the objective of increasing the number of women in top positions and also show a positive correlation between women's empowerment and the improvement of company performances.

The Department for Equal Opportunities acting as a supervisory body initiated 391 administrative proceedings against many companies falling within the scope of application of the legislation, whose composition of the boards of directors and/or boards of statutory auditors did not comply with the principle of gender balance and, therefore, are in conflict with the provisions of Presidential Decree No. 251/2012.

The Consolidated Law on publicly owned companies (Legislative Decree No. 175 of 19 August 2016) reinforces the principle of gender balance in public companies, requiring that at least one third of the appointments of directors of public companies be made by the less represented gender.

In order to ensure support for initiatives for a larger female entrepreneurial nature and to encourage greater employment opportunities, since 2013 the Italian Government has launched a significant action to this purpose by providing a public guarantee in support of Italian SMEs to cover financial transactions aimed at business activities carried out by female companies. The aim of this initiative was to intervene on difficulties of access to credit, which is the main problem faced by women in undertaking business activities and self-employment.

The number of women's businesses that have benefited from this guarantee is more than 16,000 and the number of banks involved in this operation represent about 42%, allocating a ceiling of about 1.3 million euros to businesses with a predominantly female participation and for self-employed women.

Furthermore, the percentage of women holding top positions in both the economic and political spheres has increased significantly in Italy thanks to a series of interventions, positive actions and experiments with good practices that have led to results that place Italy at the forefront of the European scenario.

On the subject of the conferral of managerial positions, Law No. 124/2015 also provided for n conferring on the Government the delegation for the reform of management, expressly stating that gender balance is one among the key criteria in the conferral of positions (Article 11, paragraph 1, letter h). At the same time the law provided for the establishment of a Commission called upon to operate with full autonomy of assessment and with the mandate of verifying compliance with the criteria for the assignment of tasks, requiring the respect for equal opportunities in order to ensure a balance between genders.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

Among the relevant results, in terms of proposals, provided by the above mentioned Task Force "Women for a New Renaissance", the following ones are included regarding the 'Communication: words and images to generate change' area: "Supporting a real paradigm shift to eradicate stereotypes, with a new kind of verbal and visual language through an advertising campaign called "Pubblicità Futuro", promoted by the Government, that vehicles positive messages and talented and inspirational female models, also through the use of led walls in the most important railway stations in the Country. [...] Promoting a new app to disseminate information and all governmental initiatives on equal opportunities policies".

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

The first National Action Plan against Trafficking in and Serious Exploitation of Human Beings was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 26 February 2016, in line with Legislative Decree No. 24/2014 transposing Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. The political and institutional Control Room, chaired by the Undersecretary of State in charge of gender equality, has been in charge for dealing with THB traditional dimensions of 'Prevention', 'Protection' and 'co-operation', also covering the relation with the protection system for refugees and asylum seekers.

5.2 Policy changes

The National Action Plan against Trafficking in and Serious Exploitation of Human Beings aims at identifying multiannual intervention strategies for the prevention and fight against these phenomena, as well as measures aimed at increasing public awareness, social prevention, emergence, and social integration of victims. Within this framework, a political and institutional Control Room, chaired by the Undersecretary of State in charge of gender equality, was established. Under the Control Room, four *ad hoc* working groups have been created to work on the THB traditional dimensions of 'Prevention', 'Protection' and 'co-operation', also covering the relation with the protection system for refugees and asylum-seekers. The implementation of this Plan and the results achieved at the national, regional and local levels have been monitored through a specific System of Monitoring and Verification. This NAP reflects a multi-level governance approach encompassing the national level represented by the DEO at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers as well as the operational actions developed, performed and managed both at the regional and local levels. Indeed, many Regions have been involved as Leaders or Partners in the framework of 'Article 18 assistance programmes' funded by the DEO along the lines of the FSE (standing for European Social Fund) Regional Operational Plans (e.g. Piedmont, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Liguria, Marche, Umbria, Lazio, Campania, Calabria, Apulia, Trentino Alto-Adige). In this respect, they provided a great support to victims' assistance, by implementing professional training; social and employment integration; and social inclusion actions according to a 'system actions' approach with the direct involvement of public administrations/ institutional stakeholders (Prefectures, Police headquarters, Carabinieri Corps and financial Police provincial headquarters, health authorities, district public attorney's offices) and educational institutions, professional associations, trade unions, private stakeholders. In support of the Control Room, the Technical Committee, appointed by President of the Council of Ministers' Decree, dated 10 April 2019, is composed of representatives from central and local administrations, law enforcement, relevant third sector bodies and unions. This committee will have to support the Control Room in all its functions, primarily by collaboration in the drafting of the new National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan, 2019–2021.

In the context of the international protection recognition procedure, the National Asylum Commission and UNHCR promoted in 2016 the project "Co-ordination mechanism for victims of trafficking" with the aim of enhancing co-ordination among social protection and international protection systems, in accordance with the provisions of the article 10(1)l of the Legislative Decree No. 24/2014. The project allowed to define suitable tools to correctly identify victims of trafficking of human beings in the context of the international protection procedure, as well as standard procedures for the co-ordinated intervention of all the institutional and private actors involved.

The launch of this project was supported by the publication of the "Guidelines on identification of victims of trafficking among asylum seekers and referral procedures" to support Territorial Commissions in identifying victims from trafficking indicators, which are recurring elements in the narrated stories or in the profile of asylum seekers connected to situation of trafficking and/or exploitation. Guidelines have greatly contributed to improving the ability of Commissions staff to pre-identify potential victims of trafficking among asylum seekers and to outline standardised procedures to report them to specialised bodies within the single programme for the emergence, assistance and social integration provided for by the Article 18 of the Legislative Decree No. 286/1998.

In line with the above-mentioned action, EM.as.com (Empowerment Asylum Commission) project — signed by the National Asylum Commission with the European Commission, started on 1 September 2019 and implemented in synergy with the Department for Public Security, the Department for Personnel Policies and UNHCR — was launched on the same date with the key aim of strengthening the National Asylum system. The Sub-Actions 6 and 7 of the project provide activities for the implementation of co-ordination mechanisms in order to enhance the identification of victims of gender-based violence (Action 6) and of trafficking (Action 7) among asylum-seekers and to facilitate referral mechanisms between the Territorial Commissions (TCs) and the organisations specialised in providing assistance and protection to victims.

In this framework, Sub-Action 6 tries to replicate the activities carried out in the context of the contrast of trafficking in human beings in the protection of victims of sexual and gender-based violence. The development of good practices is envisaged through the publication of guidelines for the correct identification of the potential victims of gender-based violence with a related training activity, and also through the activation of a standard referral procedure between Territorial Commissions and anti-violation associations, in order to facilitate the awareness by applicants of their victim status and to allow, through a reporting mechanism, the establishment of contact between the victim and the assistance and protection services on the territory.

Under Sub-Action 7, the Guidelines on Trafficking have recently been revised and a new updated version is expected to be published shortly. The new version provides for a higher number of trafficking indicators and information about new identification techniques. Moreover, the Guidelines envisage modalities for an enhanced co-operation among Territorial Commissions and the competent Prosecutor's Offices.

5.3 Institutional changes

As for women asylum seekers and refugees, 10% of the relevant Protection System projects target women, including single mothers, victims of torture or trafficking (who are mainly from Nigeria), and pregnant women. Both the SPRAR Guidelines and Manual are available.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Within the General Programme on “Security and Protection of the Freedom (under Prevention and Fight against Organised and Non Organised Crime)”, DEO participates in relevant projects: “No Trafficking” National Observatory on trafficking among refugees and asylum seekers: training; and awareness raising campaigns and tools; “STOP FOR BEG Against emerging forms of trafficking in Italy: exploited immigrants in the international phenomenon of forced begging, mainly targeting the trafficked Roma (whose final report was presented in February 2015, in Padua); “Protection First” identification, prevention and assistance to minors exposed to trafficking and exploitation (enhancement of the capacities to detect the phenomenon, especially within foster care communities).

The Ministry of Health participated in the definition of the NAP against THB, and participates in the leadership and thematic WGs on prevention and protection/ assistance. By involving regions, Interior Ministry, INMP, CSOs, and UNHCR, Ministry of Health elaborated and now implements by Ministerial Decree, dated 3 April 2017, “Guidelines for asylum seekers and refugees, victims of torture, rape and other forms of violence, including training for health care personnel and specific pathways for women and children”.

Also, the National Asylum Commission - Ministry of the Interior constantly promotes several activities, in order to implement best practices within the asylum system. One of the National Asylum Commission's competences is to promote constantly and to co-ordinate the training and refreshing courses for Territorial Commissions' members. Several Training activities are focused on thematic issues in order to:

1. facilitate the prompt identification of victims of trafficking, enhancing also a referral mechanism between TCs and the anti-trafficking projects;
2. improve members' Territorial Commissions expertise, skills and techniques in interviewing minors, LGBTI and vulnerable persons among asylum seekers.

In fact, every year, in collaboration with EASO, an high number of courses are organised on relevant issues, even using EASO (European Asylum Support Office) modules such as: “Trafficking in Human Beings”, “Gender, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation”, “Interviewing Children” and “Interviewing Vulnerable persons”.

In order to better describe the training co-ordination method, training activities from October 2019 till today can be summarised as follows:

Training activity	Course Focus	Number of participants
Four-week Theoretical-practical training course addressed to administrative officers, organised in collaboration with UNHCR and EASO	Trafficking in Human Beings (October 2019) Gender, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation (November 2019)	40
Four-week theoretical-practical training courses launched in order to update Territorial Commissions' members, organised by NAC and EASO in collaboration with UNHCR	Trafficking in Human Beings (October 2020) Gender, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation (October 2020)	72
Ongoing four-week theoretical-practical training courses launched in order to update Territorial Commissions' members, organised by NAC and EASO in collaboration with UNHCR	Interviewing Children (November 2020) Interviewing Vulnerable Persons (October/November 2020) Trafficking in Human Beings (November 2020)	101

Moreover, in the context of the activities carried on by NAC in collaboration with UNHCR in the framework of the project EM.as.com for the contrast of trafficking in human beings, two national meetings were held with the participation of all the actors involved (Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Territorial Commissions, anti-trafficking services), in November 2019 and July 2020, with the purpose of collecting the updated results of the anti-trafficking actions carried out and of implementing an updated knowledge of the phenomenon.

The project was also developed with the promotion of specific training activities directed to members of Territorial Commissions and operators of anti-trafficking services, to enhance their background in identifying victims of trafficking and developing referral procedures, that have started on October 2020 with an online workshop for the Territorial Commission of Ancona.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

In 2016, Legislative Decree No. 90/2016 amended Act No. 196/2009 on public accounting and finance by introducing in Article 38-septies, the experimental adoption of gender budgeting for the impact assessment of budget policies on women and men in terms of money, services, unpaid time and work. The measure was aimed at evaluating the different effects of budget policies on women and men, respectively.

State gender budget will be formulated in relation to the annual budget report, so that the current year will be reported under the 2016 report. To this end, Administrations are working to define the spending items to be included by reclassifying them according to the objective to be reached.

By Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers together with the Ministry of Economy and Finance of 16 June 2017 that the first experimental stage “of the adoption of gender budgeting” has been started up, “to evaluate the different impact of budget policies on men and women, in terms of money, services, time and unpaid work”.

This forecast, introduced in the state budget format as reformed in 2016, must therefore be a powerful gender mainstreaming tool that analyses and contributes to reducing the lack of equality of genders in all sector policies and therefore aids full promotion of a person’s rights and of equal opportunities.

This experiment, which involves all central state administrations, including branches and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, will on the one hand require a reclassification of state budget spending to: a) neutral, with regard to gender; b) sensitive, i.e. that they have a different impact on men and women; c) destined to reduce lack of gender equality and on the other and identification of statistical indicators in order to monitor the actions taken to affect lack of gender equality.

The Department for Equal Opportunities works together with the Ministry of Economy and Finance and ISTAT in order to identify useful indicators for monitoring the impact of separate gender policies in the national statistics plan.

6.2 Policy changes

Over the years, the activities of the Italian Government and the integrated institutional system described in further details below have continued to be focused on a wider concept of equal opportunities with the main aim of removing all forms of discrimination and developing gender sensitive policies in many different areas. In particular, special attention has been paid to: GBV; THB; CEFM; FGM; employment; equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men; education and the fight against stereotypes; health; women’s participation in the political and economic decision making; and immigration. The measures taken in all these areas have contributed to enhancing the role of women in society and improve their image and involvement in public life. Furthermore, the Italian Government has implemented specific gender mainstreaming policies⁹ through ESF and ERDF and by a systematic collaboration with the Regions.

This approach will be preserved for the drafting of the future national planning on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

6.3 Institutional changes

In line with its institutional mandate, reiterated on the occasion of the establishment of the Task Force “Women for a New Renaissance” in 2020, DEO is committed to work through a mainstreaming approach throughout all the areas included in the definition of gender policies at large.

Indeed, the final document released by the Task Force is a document that provides an initial proposal of actions and recommendations and will be integrated through the planning that has been implemented by the Department for Equal Opportunities. It presents proposals to increase the percentage of women in every working sector, to overcome barriers that prevent the advancement of career paths, in particular in the fastest growing fields (STEM, computing, cloud computing, data and artificial intelligence), to address gender stereotypes that prevent women to participate in leadership positions, to enable new energies and opportunities for all.

Just to mention an example, as for the ‘Gender equality: the responsibility to design the future’ area, as per ‘Promoting gender equality and female leadership’, the intention is: “Establishing an Observatory on Gender Equality at the Department for Equal Opportunities to monitor the level of gender equality of public and private actors, also in order to introduce ex-ante and ex-post gender

impact assessment at institutional level as a standard practice in the design phase of any legislative, political, strategic, programmatic initiative, and to define a three-year strategic plan for gender equality.” [... as well as] “Establishing a working group involving the Department for Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Education to define a strategy to eliminate gender stereotypes at all levels of education, also in order to promote gender equality education through school books” and “Adopting the general principle of gender equality and balanced leadership between men and women, to be applied to all public actors and decision-makers and all governing bodies at central and territorial level and to be monitored through a special body to ensure compliance with this principle”.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Please see the former reply.

LATVIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Strengthening the fathers' role

The Ministry of Welfare has launched the communication campaign “Daddy can!” in September 2020. The aim of the campaign was to strengthen the father's role in family and society by undermining existing prejudices and perceptions about the responsibilities for women and men and also reducing stereotypes about divorced and single father. Communication campaign was based on three inspiring video stories by three divorced dads – Lauris Bokišs, organiser of the training in NGO “Fathers”, Aldis Kalniņš, the creator of the science centre “Blue Miracles” and the video operator Krišs Spruksts, where they share with experience in raising children, explaining why the father's involvement and presence in childcare is even more important when the mother and father is divorced.

One of the videos with subtitles in English <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfwZwy3n45c>.

Awareness raising on gender equality

To draw society's attention towards the issues of discrimination, tolerance and unequal treatment, an information campaign “Openness is a Value” was launched in 2018. The first year was dedicated to asylum seekers and persons with refugee or alternative status, appealing to society to see the humane side of the refugees and asylum seeker crisis. Year 2020 information campaign “Openness is a value” addresses gender equality, focusing on labour market issues. The campaign is tackling gender stereotypes and biases about the profession that person chooses to study or work, aiming to reduce gender segregated labour market. “He can=She can” is slogan of this year campaign, because a person's choice and interests (net gender) are the only limit in choosing career and profession. There are several issues campaign is focusing on – stereotypes in education and choosing of profession, pay gap, women's and men's role in family and distribution of responsibilities.

Barbershop conference in Riga

The Ministry of Welfare in co-operation with the Nordic Council of Ministers and Danish Presidency organised the **Barbershop conference on men's role in promoting gender equality**. Experts of various fields from Latvia, Estonia, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Spain discussed how culture, art, advertising, media, education, youth organisations, and the work environment reflect on men's wellbeing and challenges men are facing as fathers, employers and employees as well as men's role in promoting gender equality. The conference provided an opportunity not only to get more familiar with practices developed in other countries but also to discuss the current gender equality trends in terms of the challenges we face in our everyday lives.

The link to the record of the conference – [part 1](#) and [part 2](#).

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

On 1 August amendments in regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers “Procedures for Preventing Violence Threats and Providing Temporary Protection Against Violence” came into force. The amendments foreseen, that in the cases of domestic violence police officers are obliged not only to clarify all the circumstances of the event, but also to prepare an informative report about the case. The report will help to ensure effective co-operation between the authorities involved and to prevent domestic violence. Police officer have to send the report to the Municipal social service institution.

The report contains the minimum amount of information that the social worker would need to know in order to offer the protected person services directly relevant to his or her needs, establish a conversation with the protected person in such a way that the protected person should avoid re-victimisation and that the protected person should not repeat the details of the incident, which was already told to a police officer.

Police officer will inform the municipal social service institution in all cases where the risk of violence threats has been identified, whether or not a police decision on the separation will be taken (for example, if the risk of violence has been identified, but the protected person refuses to write an application so that the police can take a decision on the separation).

2.4 Research and awareness raising

On 12 October - marking the European Union's Day against trafficking in human beings, the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched an awareness-raising campaign "Victim of Human Trafficking?". The aim of campaign is to address the public and raise awareness on trafficking in human beings, its various forms and risks, its consequences, available support and victims' rights. With support of the Latvian Union of Local Governments, the Ministry of Culture and the National Library, the Ministry of Welfare and Municipal Social Service Institution, the State Labour Inspectorate, the Employment State Agency, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, the Riga airport and non-governmental organisations posters and information materials of campaign are distributed all around Latvia. The videos with information about assistance and available support in cases of sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and forced marriages have been published on websites and social networks of institutions involved in preventing human trafficking.

2.5 Other pertinent developments e.g. on promising policy reforms, the issue of resourcing, etc.

A methodological material for social work on victims of violence and perpetrators has been developed. The purpose of the methodological material is to provide methodological support to social workers practising in local government social services who work daily with victims of violence and perpetrators. The material includes a broad range of theories, methods and approaches recommended for social work with victims of violence and/or perpetrators. The methodological material also clarifies the different types of violence, the characteristics and consequences of violence, with a separate section devoted to co-operation between the institutions involved in violence cases.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

On 14 July 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers approved **Latvia's first National Action Plan for the implementation of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in Latvia for 2020-2025**, developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The National Action Plan foresees three main tasks: (1) promoting awareness and knowledge of society, particularly the new generation, on gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence; (2) training for the defence and home affairs sector, including the creation of a position for gender equality advisor and (3) the exchange of experience and knowledge. The measures are aimed to raise public awareness about resolution, as well as gender equality. It is also intended to carry out the training of specialists working in the defence and home affairs sector about gender equality issues, including the prevention of gender-based violence. It is also envisaged to establish five positions of gender equality adviser in the defence and home affairs sector.

LITHUANIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2020, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania along with Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and other partners, in order to combat gender related stereotypes in family life, initiated a large-scale social advertising campaign. It was dedicated to encouraging men's involvement in family life as well as promote a positive image of men as father (especially in early years of a child's life).

Advertising campaign lasted few months and included following: a video translated on the national television, posters in cities, short advertisements on the radio, specialists' appearances in radio talk shows and podcasts, series of related articles in a newspapers and social media. In addition, a specialised website with a compilation of good practices and inspiring stories was created.

Moreover, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania along with Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and other partners also launched a study dedicated to find out the attitude of Lithuanian men towards work life balance initiatives applied in the workplace and to identify measures that would encourage them to become more involved in family life and an equal division of unpaid work and care responsibilities.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

One of the most important legislative steps was taken by the Lithuanian Parliament back in 2011 when the Law on the Protection from Domestic Violence was passed. The law, which was prepared in close collaboration with multiple NGOs, human rights activists marked what many call a turning point in our attitude to the violence that is happening behind the closed doors of a family home.

Recently the ministry has revised the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence. The aim of the revision is:

- to define violence against women,
- to provide the possibility to issue a protection order for victims that obliges the perpetrator to leave the household for 15 days, to provide an obligation for a suspected perpetrator to attend special courses to change behaviour in future relationships,
- to provide the general obligation to report about cases of domestic violence,
- to strengthen inter-institutional co-operation.

2.2 Policy changes

Lithuania has the National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women.

During the COVID-19 crisis, numbers of domestic violence crimes have increased about 20%. To facilitate that, a system was created which allows (potential) victims of domestic violence to contact appropriate authorities, not only by calling but also via SMS. Authorities can be contacted by dialling the short number 112 and providing the minimum amount of information: name, address, what happened. Upon receiving such messages, authorities were dispatched immediately and specialised helpdesk informed about the incident by the e-mail automatically.

Additional funding was provided for a single helpline number (800) and an online chat programme. Also, additional funds were allocated to strengthen emotional, psychological, counselling assistance. It's an easier way to report the crime, faster response and smoother collaboration between authorities and victims help desk.

In Lithuania, victims of domestic violence can call a free helpline number for 24 hours. They can also get help via e-mail or online chat. There is also a “Line of Hope” for adults (in cases of domestic violence as well) which is reached by the European number 116 123.

Protection and support for the victims of domestic violence is mainly provided through the network of specialised assistance centres, administered by NGOs. Since 2012, these centres help in overcoming the crisis, provide psychological, legal assistance, as well as information, mediation and representation.

2.3 Institutional changes

One of the aims of the revised Law on Protection from Domestic Violence is to create an Advisory Council to the Government seeking to co-ordinate questions of the domestic violence at the national level consisting of 15 members.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The biggest reform – revision of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2020, the Ministry of Justice of Lithuania continued to play an active role in raising the awareness of the public, especially rural women, about means to access and availability of justice, including access to free legal aid. Information websites have been updated and the accessibility of the FAQ system has been simplified. In order to ensure access to information for the rural population, information on mediation was disseminated through posters, leaflets and slides in co-operation with NGOs.

Additionally, as municipalities in Lithuania are responsible for providing and organising primary legal aid, they have been encouraged to increase the availability of information through their channels. The most common ways of informing the public were: displaying information on billboards, displaying posters in public places, publishing information on municipal websites, distributing leaflets and other information material, publishing information messages in the media or organising meetings with the locals.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

In October 2020, legal acts were amended to strengthen an individual approach to integration and to create a more complementary system that ensures collaboration between refugees themselves, governmental reception centre, NGOs implementing the integration after refugees leave the reception centre and other relevant actors (for example – employment service agency). This will involve a more gender sensitive approach to individual needs of a refugee or a family taking into account the cultural and religion elements that are often crucial for successful integration.

5.2 Policy changes

In 2019, the “Description of the Procedure for Determining the Age, Accommodation and Other Procedural Actions of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors Identified in the Republic of Lithuania” was amended (approved by Order No. A1-229/1V-289/V-491 in 2014 by the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania and the Minister of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (wording of Order No. A1-538/1V-780/V-1067)). It establishes that if the State Border Guard Service identifies unaccompanied minors, it should inform the territorial division authorised by the State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the

Ministry of Social Security and Labour. A representative of this department must attend the first interview, as this helps to ensure the best interests of the child.

Currently, in Lithuania the national mechanism for the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings has been formalised in the recommendations for the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings, pre-trial investigation and inter-institutional co-operation (the recommendation was approved by the Order of the Prosecutor General, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Social Security and Labour No. I-327/1V-1015/A1-758 in 2015). Recommendations define a “victim of trafficking in human beings” as an individual of whom a criminal offence of trafficking in human beings has been committed, regardless of that person’s wish to be recognised as a victim or at the time of such recognition. One of the requirements of the above-mentioned recommendation is that in all cases, when identifying a person who has already become or might be a victim of trafficking, he/she (his/her representative) must be informed about the possibility of receiving assistance from NGOs providing assistance to victims of trafficking.

5.3 Institutional changes

The legal acts in Lithuania regulate that accommodation needs to be organised taking into account gender-based needs (the accommodation needs to be separate for women and men, the organising of accommodation takes into account culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, etc.).

The services provided are also taking into account gender-sensitive issues, especially related to culture and religion (language training, health care, psychological health care is organised with an aim to maximise the involvement of different target groups, for example due to cultural reasons there are language groups for only women so that they would be allowed to participate; in addition childcare services are being provided to ensure the availability for women to participate in activities).

5.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2020, there were six pilot municipalities involved in a research regarding the needs and possibilities of local migrants and the competencies of the municipality to implement a successful integration strategy. This research is a part of a wider project that will strengthen the leadership of local authority and help them develop and later implement an integration strategy based on local needs.

There is a constant dissemination of information, implemented by NGOs in Lithuania. There are three integration centres in Lithuania run by NGOs that provide necessary social services, information, consulting, legal aid, health care, psychological health care, etc. NGOs, the Public Refugee Reception Centre, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Ministry of Interior, the Migration Department and the State Border Guard Service communicate constantly to identify and address information gaps.

In 2021, there are plans to initiate research regarding the situation of work migrants and also to launch an information campaign aimed at fostering intercultural mentality in Lithuania.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

To encourage the integration of women, there is a priority given for projects that aim to initiate local initiatives aiming at women employment, woman civil and social activism, networking of local and migrant women.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

With the change in the methodology of national planning, after 2021, there will not be a separate programme for equal opportunities for women and men in Lithuania anymore. Instead, gender equality will be planned as a horizontal principle in most development programmes prepared by all ministries, covering all areas of life. For example, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour Lithuania is working on four development programmes: Improving Family Policy, Inclusive Labour Markets,

Income Inequality and Social Inclusion. All of them will review thematically relevant issues related to equality between women and men (gender-based stereotypes, unequal distribution of unpaid work and care responsibilities, women in top decision-making, segregation in education and labour market, income and pensions inequality, pay gap, etc.) and identify directions for action to address this issue.

LUXEMBOURG

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

1.4.1. Observatoire de l'Égalité

L'égalité femmes-hommes a certes progressé ces dernières années. Mais des déséquilibres persistent sur le marché de l'emploi. La violence et les stéréotypes sexistes touchent encore de nombreuses femmes. Pour développer des mesures ciblées et renforcer les actions, il est important d'avoir une vue d'ensemble des évolutions avec des chiffres ventilés par sexe. Le nouvel Observatoire de l'Égalité du Luxembourg, présenté le 9 mars 2021, répond à trois fonctions principales :

- fournir des données objectives pour développer des stratégies politiques ;
- soutenir le travail des professionnels du terrain en leur donnant une vue d'ensemble chiffrée ;
- suivre et analyser les évolutions de la situation.

Un site web reflétant l'(in)égalité dans sept domaines prioritaires

S'inspirant du *Gender Equality Index* de l'Institut européen pour l'égalité entre les sexes, l'Observatoire se décline en sept domaines. Les indicateurs sont progressivement développés et finalisés jusqu'en 2023. L'Observatoire repose avant tout sur le **site web** (www.observatoire-egalite.lu) destiné au grand public.

Domaines	Réalisation
Violence domestique	2019/2020
Emploi	2020
Prise de décision	2021
Equilibre entre vie privée et professionnelle	2021
Education	2022
Revenu	2022
Santé	2023

Les domaines de la violence domestique et de l'emploi développés en 2020

La violence domestique et l'emploi ont été les premiers domaines de l'Observatoire à être implémentés en 2020. Le MEGA, en coopération avec les institutions et organisations partenaires, a retenu 17 indicateurs relatifs à la violence domestique, et sept pour le volet de l'emploi. Ces premiers éléments seront renforcés et mis à jour au fil du temps. La liste des indicateurs est non exhaustive, du fait qu'il s'agit de fournir progressivement une perspective aussi large que possible sur l'égalité entre les sexes dans notre pays.

Les **indicateurs relatifs à la violence domestique** renseignent p.ex. sur les interventions policières, les infractions enregistrées au moment d'une intervention policière, les victimes de violence domestique et conjugale, le nombre des auteurs expulsés, le nombre des auteurs pris en charge par le service d'aide aux auteurs de violence domestique ou encore les examens documentés par l'unité médico-légale de documentation des violences auprès du Laboratoire national de Santé.

Le **domaine de l'Emploi** met l'accent sur la situation générale de l'égalité sur le marché de l'emploi en général, le temps du travail, le type de contrat de travail, la ségrégation, le chômage, l'équilibre entre la vie professionnelle et la vie privée, l'égalité salariale et la prise de décision.

Prise de décision et la compatibilité entre vie privée et vie professionnelle en 2021

L'égalité dans la prise de décision sera analysée en 2021. Elle inclura le champ politique, l'économie, le pouvoir judiciaire, l'administration, la société civile, le sport, la culture et les médias. En 2021, l'Observatoire approfondira également les données sur l'équilibre entre la vie privée et la vie professionnelle, domaine qui est complémentaire par rapport aux données sur l'emploi et qui sera particulièrement utile pour analyser les effets de la pandémie.

1.4.2. Recherche sur les stéréotypes (Coopération avec l'Université du Luxembourg) et mise en œuvre des projets ayant comme objectif de lutter contre les stéréotypes sexués

En novembre 2020, le ministère de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes a présenté un premier bilan de certains projets ayant comme objectif de lutter contre les stéréotypes liés au sexe et qui sont mis en œuvre en partenariat avec l'Université du Luxembourg, le service de consultation pour hommes en situation de détresse INFOMANN et l'Institut für Gender und Diversity de Berlin.

La conférence de presse a été l'occasion de présenter

- Les WEBTALKS virtuels portant sur la stéréotypes sexués, réalisés par le MEGA en coopération avec le MEDIA Center de l'Université du Luxembourg.
- Le projet MADAK – Méi Männer an der ausserschoulescher Kannerbetreung réalisé par le service INFOMANN et l'Institut für Gender und Diversity à Berlin.
- Le nouveau clip diffusé au sujet de Men and Care à l'occasion de la Journée Internationale de l'Homme célébrée le 19 novembre.

WEBTALKS

Les WEBTALKS virtuels réalisés avec le Media Center de l'Université du Luxembourg sont calqués sur le projet de recherche lancé en avril 2019 s'étirant sur trois ans intitulée « **From Stereotypes to Hostile Sexism - A Psychological Analysis of Conceptions about Gender** » réalisée par Miriam-Linnea Hale, M.Sc. sous la direction du Ass.Prof.Dr. André Melzer.

Les présentations virtuelles sont six unités de 20 à 25 minutes évoquant d'abord les aspects scientifiques, voire théoriques des stéréotypes sexués pour enchaîner par la suite avec les projets pratiques actuellement en cours visant à créer une plus grande sensibilité à ce sujet. Le point d'orgue sera fait par un regard vers l'Allemagne pour se familiariser avec leur approche de travail sur les effets des stéréotypes sexués auprès des enfants. Les présentations ont été diffusées à partir du 18 novembre 2020 à une cadence hebdomadaire sur les canaux de diffusion du ministère de l'Égalité et de l'Université du Luxembourg.

Projet MADAK – Méi Männer an der ausserschoulescher Kannerbetreung

Le projet MADAK – Méi Männer an der ausserschoulescher Kannerbetreung a été lancé en 2018 et se trouve actuellement dans sa deuxième phase de réalisation. Le but du projet est de créer une plus grande mixité de genre dans les professions sociales, et dans la profession de l'éducateur/trice en particulier.

Sur base d'un premier état des lieux réalisé en 2018 évaluant le ratio entre femmes et hommes dans la profession de l'éducateur dans un certain nombre d'établissements dans l'éducation non-formelle

publique, les responsables d'INFOMANN et de l'Institut für Gender und Diversity ont initié dans cette deuxième phase six projets-pilote entre autres avec *Caritas Jeunes et Famille*, la *Croix-Rouge Luxembourgeoise*, le *Lycée Technique pour professions éducatives et sociales* ou encore l'*Université du Luxembourg*. Leur objectif commun est de rompre avec le stéréotype que la profession de l'éducateur/trice est une profession féminisée et de promouvoir la mixité entre femmes et hommes dans cette profession.

Le bilan de ce projet sera présenté en mai 2021 dans le cadre d'une grande conférence avec la participation de nombreuses et nombreux représentant(e)s du milieu du travail social.

Journée Internationale de l'Homme

La Journée Internationale de l'Homme est célébrée annuellement le 19 novembre. Elle vise à revaloriser le rôle des hommes au sein de la société, ainsi qu'à mettre en lumière les domaines dans lesquels les différences entre femmes et hommes les désavantagent. Initialement organisé en 1999 pour promouvoir la santé des garçons et des hommes, le focus est aujourd'hui mis sur la discrimination à leur encontre dans certains domaines tels que p.ex. les sanctions judiciaires ou encore les attitudes et les attentes sociales, sans pour autant négliger l'amélioration des relations entre les sexes et la promotion de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes en général.

La Journée est également l'occasion pour remettre en question les stéréotypes, les rôles et les préjugés par rapport au rôle des hommes dans notre société et pour montrer que la masculinité est un concept pluridimensionnel.

Dans la lignée du [clip réalisé pour la Journée en 2019 sur la thématique « Men who Care »](#), le ministère a réalisé un [nouveau clip plaidant pour plus de mixité dans les professions sociales](#) qui sera diffusé dans les semaines qui suivent le 19 novembre 2020 sur les différents canaux de communication du MEGA et d'INFOMANN.

2. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

2.2.1. Groupe de travail interministériel pour élaborer une stratégie nationale « Violence domestique »

Suite à la ratification de la Convention d'Istanbul en 2018, le gouvernement luxembourgeois en les personnes des ministres de l'Égalité entre les Femmes et les Hommes, de la Justice et de la Sécurité Intérieure a instauré en novembre 2019 un groupe de travail interministériel « Violence domestique » (par la suite « Groupe de travail ») pour réunir autour d'une table les institutions publiques directement impliquées⁹⁹ pour discuter de la nécessité d'adapter le dispositif actuellement en vigueur. Les discussions ont également porté sur les pistes avancées à l'étranger (tel que p.ex. l'introduction dudit « bracelet électronique ») pour évaluer la possibilité de son application au Luxembourg. Le groupe de travail a été à l'écoute des victimes et des auteurs, tant à travers une consultation des services d'aide et d'assistance qui prennent en charge ces publics cibles, qu'à travers les récits et expériences propres rapportés directement par des victimes et des auteurs.

Le groupe de travail a terminé ses consultations en décembre 2020 et adressé un rapport préliminaire avec des recommandations concrètes pour améliorer le dispositif de protection contre la violence domestique. Les différentes recommandations vont au-delà de la violence domestique tout en incluant des propositions relatives aux nouvelles formes de violence. Ainsi, le groupe de travail a identifié les différentes formes de violence qui ont surgi ces dernières années et qui se basent notamment sur les possibilités offertes par les nouvelles technologies ainsi que les réseaux sociaux.

⁹⁹ Ministères de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, de la Justice et de la Sécurité intérieure, la Police Grand-Ducale, le Parquet auprès du Tribunaux d'arrondissement de Luxembourg et de Diekirch

Voilà pourquoi, le groupe s'est prononcé en faveur d'une adaptation du Code pénal et/ou de la [loi du 11 août 1982 concernant la protection de la vie privée](#) en y intégrant des dispositions sanctionnant ces nouvelles formes de harcèlement et invite le ministère de la Justice en collaboration avec le Parquet de proposer des adaptations dans ce sens. D'autres pistes concernent des adaptations de la loi du 8 septembre 2003 sur la violence domestique ainsi que de la législation sur la protection des données, notamment dans le contexte d'une conservation prolongée des données policières et judiciaires sur des auteurs de violence.

Les conclusions du groupe de travail, qui a également identifié de nouvelles pistes en terme de prévention et de sensibilisation, seront présentées en juillet 2021. Elles représenteront ainsi la stratégie luxembourgeoise de lutte contre la violence en général, et la violence domestique en particulier, à implémenter en 2021 et 2022, dont notamment les changements au niveau législatif décrits ci-dessus.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

2.4.1. Monitoring sur la violence domestique dans le contexte de la crise liée au COVID19

Comme l'année 2020 a été fortement marquée par la crise sanitaire liée au COVID-19, le Comité tient à mettre un accent sur la gestion de cette crise qui a été et qui est toujours sans précédent. Cette crise, les différentes mesures gouvernementales prises, y inclus le confinement imposé par l'état de crise, ont obligé beaucoup de familles et de couples à vivre de manière continue dans une promiscuité inhabituelle et de longue durée une situation qui a augmenté le risque de conflits et de comportements violents, d'escalade ou de récurrence de conflits et de violences domestiques (familiale et conjugale).

Afin d'éviter une augmentation et une aggravation substantielle des cas de violence domestique au Luxembourg en ces temps de crise sanitaire, sociale et économique, les principaux acteurs de terrain notamment, les institutions policière et judiciaire, les associations d'assistances aux victimes et des auteur(e)s œuvrant dans le domaine de la lutte contre la violence, ont dès le début de la crise mis en place un dispositif de gestion de crise. Ce dernier a prévu un **monitoring hebdomadaire** mesurant l'évolution de la violence domestique, la continuité des mécanismes et procédures légales, règlementaires et administratifs en place, des alternatives de logement en cas de surpopulation des structures d'accueil d'urgence, le développement du site information « violence.lu », la mise en place d'une help line 20601060 s'adressant aux victimes de violence domestique ainsi que la pérennité du soutien financier par l'État.

Le monitoring hebdomadaire précité a été mis en place dès mars 2020 avec les principaux acteurs de terrain, dont les membres du Comité, pour collecter, d'une part, les données clés et évaluer de semaine en semaine la situation d'augmentation des risques de conflits, de comportements violents et d'actes de violences domestiques liée au COVID19, et pour réajuster, d'autre part, à tout moment les mesures nécessaires et appropriées pour garantir leur efficacité dans l'intérêt du public cible.

L'objectif de la **nouvelle helpline violence domestique** pour femmes et hommes, mise en place en avril 2020 a été de prévenir, voire de stopper le plus en amont possible des situations de violence domestique par l'écoute, le soutien et au besoin la réorientation des appelants pour une prise en charge adaptée à leurs besoins.

Le site www.violence.lu mis en place en 2010 pour sensibiliser sur toutes les facettes et formes de la violence à l'égard des femmes, des hommes et des enfants, et pour informer sur le réseau d'aide au Luxembourg a été complété par des « FAQ » multilingues pour informer sur le dispositif de gestion de crise et pour informer sur les possibilités de prise en charge des victimes et auteurs de violence domestiques en ces temps de crise. En 2020, le site a été réaménagé, afin de le rendre plus interactif et accessible pour victimes, auteurs et témoins de violence domestique et de violence fondées sur le sexe. Sa présentation est prévue pour mai 2021. Compte tenu de la situation linguistique au

Luxembourg et du caractère multiculturel de notre pays, il a été décidé de mettre à disposition ce site en langues allemande, anglaise, française et portugaise.

2.4.2. Projets de prévention et de sensibilisation contre la violence domestique

Notons finalement qu'en cours de 2020/21, le ministère de l'Égalité a mis sur pied d'autres projets de prévention contre la violence domestique visant tant les victimes que les auteur(e)s de violence domestique. Le ministère de l'Égalité intervient dans la lutte contre la violence domestique avec une approche multidimensionnelle. En complément de la prise en charge des victimes et des auteur(e)s, des activités de prévention permettent d'agir à un stade précoce et de sensibiliser la population. Le ministère de l'Égalité et l'association sans but lucratif Art Attitudes ont ainsi signé une convention pour un nouveau projet de théâtre de prévention en matière de violence domestique. Il sera lancé au niveau communal pour atteindre toutes les communes du pays. Le concept de théâtre forum avait débuté en 2011 avec un projet de la CCPL en langue portugaise et à l'attention de la communauté lusophone. Il a été proposé jusqu'en 2018. La ministre Taina Bofferding relance désormais le théâtre forum avec une offre dans plusieurs langues.

L'objectif de ce projet mis en œuvre par l'École du théâtre est de dé-tabouiser et dé-stigmatiser la violence domestique. Il s'agit de sensibiliser à l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et à l'impact des stéréotypes de genre, de stimuler la prise de conscience et la réactivité de toute la société, et d'informer sur l'existence des dispositions légales et réglementaires sanctionnant la violence domestique. L'approche participative du théâtre forum et la mise en scène de différentes situations de violence domestique permettront de présenter toutes les facettes de la violence. Le public sera invité à prendre un rôle actif et à s'exprimer sur le sujet. Le projet a s'inscrit dans une démarche globale du ministère pour déjouer la montée de tensions, l'escalade et l'aggravation des violences et prévenir la violence domestique et les violences sexistes.

Le développement de ce nouveau projet se fait en concertation avec les membres du Comité de coopération entre les professionnels dans le domaine de la lutte contre la violence, notamment les services prenant en charge les victimes et auteur(e)s de violence domestique, les autorités judiciaires et la police. Il est prévu d'organiser une demi-douzaine de représentations en 2021 en fonction des possibilités et dispositions sanitaires. Les interventions théâtrales sont disponibles en quatre langues (luxembourgeois, français allemand, anglais).

Un autre projet important mis sur pied par le ministère de l'Égalité luxembourgeois est celui de la formation de lutte contre la violence domestique dénommée « *Fe Schrëtt géint Gewalt* » (One step against violence). Cette formation s'adresse à des auteur(e)s de violence domestique au Luxembourg. Le développement de cette nouvelle formation se fera en étroite concertation avec les autres acteurs du terrain, notamment le Riicht Eraus qui reste le principal service agréé (conformément à la loi du 8 septembre 2003 sur la violence domestique) prenant en charge les auteur-e-s adultes de violence domestique. Il s'agit de trouver des synergies et d'assurer le travail en réseau permettant ainsi l'échange de savoir-faire et d'expertise. Il est prévu qu'une formation dure 80 heures et s'étende suivant les besoins et les profils des auteur-e-s sur une dizaine de semaines. Les participant-e-s seront outillé-e-s pour apprendre à maîtriser et à surmonter leurs comportements violents et pour se rendre compte de leur responsabilité et de la conséquence de leurs actes. Ceci se fera grâce à une panoplie de différents techniques et exercices pratiques de mise en situation, de jeux de rôle et de discussions. La formation est ouverte à tout(e)s auteur(e)s de violence domestique.

6. Objectif : intégrer les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

6.2.1. Le Plan d'action national pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes

Lors d'une conférence de presse, le 17 juillet 2020, le ministère de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes a présenté les grandes lignes du plan d'action national pour une égalité à tous les niveaux et dans tous les domaines du quotidien. C'est une feuille de route avec des mesures et actions ciblées pour ces prochaines années. L'égalité entre les femmes et hommes concerne tous les domaines de la vie : l'éducation, l'emploi, la vie privée et le vivre ensemble dans l'espace public. Le Plan d'action national pour une égalité entre les femmes et les hommes rassemble les priorités et enjeux relatifs à l'égalité des sexes.

Sur le fond, le plan s'articule autour de sept priorités thématiques et comprend 48 mesures et engagements. Les grands domaines d'action sont :

- Inciter et soutenir l'engagement citoyen et politique
- Lutter contre les stéréotypes et le sexisme
- Promouvoir l'égalité dans l'éducation
- Faire progresser l'égalité professionnelle
- Promouvoir l'égalité au niveau local
- Lutter contre les violences domestiques
- Encourager le développement d'une société plus égalitaire

L'égalité n'est en tout cas pas uniquement une affaire de femmes, comme l'a rappelé Taina Bofferding. « L'égalité est une priorité politique transversale et fait appel à une responsabilité commune et partagée par l'ensemble de la société, donc par les femmes et les hommes ». Pour préparer ce plan d'action, le ministère a recueilli l'avis d'institutions publiques, de chambres professionnelles, d'associations et de gestionnaires du secteur social. Les citoyen-ne-s ont également exprimé leurs opinions lors d'une consultation publique qui avait récolté quelque 1800 réponses en trois semaines.

Sur la forme, ce nouveau plan d'action est un document dynamique et évolutif. Ainsi, le plan pourra inclure des adaptations périodiques. Il sera évalué à un rythme triennal.

7. Principaux défis ; leçons à retirer

Réflexions sur l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans le cadre de la crise liée au COVID-19

L'apparition du coronavirus début 2020 et le déclenchement subséquent de l'état de crise ont eu des impacts sur une multitude de domaines de notre vie quotidienne : la santé en premier lieu mais également la gestion de crise, l'emploi, la vie publique, la garde d'enfants, l'éducation, les tâches domestiques ou encore les relations conjugales et familiales. En termes d'égalité entre les sexes, la question est de savoir comment ces changements radicaux de la vie quotidienne ont influencé l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes. Et de quelle manière la pandémie remettrait en cause les avancées en matière d'égalité des sexes obtenues au cours des dernières décennies ? Il est sûr et certain que ces questionnements impactent chaque pays du monde, y compris les Etats membres du Conseil de l'Europe.

Voilà pourquoi, le Conseil de l'Europe, et la Commission pour l'Égalité de genre en particulier, doit analyser cette question et l'effet de la crise pandémique sur l'égalité entre femmes et hommes afin de prévenir un retour en arrière en perdant les acquis des décennies passées, notamment dans le domaine des droits de la femme.

Le 20 janvier 2021, le ministère de l'Égalité luxembourgeois a signé une convention de coopération avec le *LISER – Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research* pour approfondir cette question dans le cadre d'un projet de recherche, dont les résultats sont prévus pour fin 2021. Cette analyse est

d'ailleurs une action concrète du Plan d'action national pour une égalité entre les femmes et les hommes adopté par le gouvernement en juin 2020.

Dans le cadre du projet d'étude, le LISER mettra le focus sur plusieurs thèmes tels que

- les différences entre les femmes et les hommes se rapportant aux aspects de santé directement liées au COVID19 ;
- l'impact des mesures introduites par le gouvernement luxembourgeois à la suite du premier confinement en mars 2020 ;
- l'impact de la crise sur les femmes et les hommes sur le chômage et les ressources financières ;
- le recours au télétravail par les femmes et les hommes, ainsi que les différences entre les sexes en terme d'emploi du temps dans le contexte de l'éducation à domicile et dans l'exécution des tâches domestiques ;
- les différences dans l'attitude portée à l'égard de la crise en général et les mesures pour endiguer la pandémie en particulier, telles que par exemple lesdits « gestes barrières ».

La ministre de l'Égalité Taina Bofferding souligne que la crise a un impact indéniable sur l'égalité entre les sexes. A commencer par l'inégalité du ratio femmes-hommes relatif au nombre d'infecté(e)s et au nombre des cas mortels liés au COVID19. *« Nous constatons également que les femmes ont été plus engagées dans l'éducation des enfants à domicile durant la période du premier confinement, et de même pour les tâches domestiques »,* souligne la ministre. *« Un réel danger existe, celui de retourner vers les stéréotypes des années 1950 en matière d'égalité femmes-hommes. Comme l'annonce le Forum Economique Mondial, les retombées du Coronavirus pourraient être pires pour les femmes que pour les hommes. En temps de crise, l'égalité des sexes est un objectif qui est souvent suspendu et a tendance à être considérée comme secondaire. Mais il est essentiel de comprendre le déséquilibre des impacts de COVID-19 sur le genre à travers des données ventilées par sexe. Avoir une base scientifique sous forme d'une étude avec un état des lieux chiffré est un prérequis indispensable. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de rectifier des inégalités de longue date. Nous voulons construire une société plus juste et résiliente. »*

MALTA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

The Maltese Government has been working on developing its first National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in order to address inequalities and several challenges mostly faced by women in Malta. One of the objectives of this policy development is to prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism considering that gender stereotypes are a root cause of gender inequality and affect all areas of society. Gender stereotypes are often combined with other stereotypes such as those based on race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, hence this strategy and action plan aims to adopt intersectionality throughout.

The Department for Industrial and Employment Relations (DIER) continues to actively seeks to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in the world of work. It promotes fair recruitment and employment, equality in career and personal development opportunities and family friendly measures available for all employees.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) has carried out research and awareness raising campaigns on the gender gaps over the life cycles by means of its EU co-funded project, 'Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence' (PGEI). This was carried out by means of: research on the possibility of the development of an Equal Pay Tool; the provision of training to trade union representatives; awareness-raising campaigns on the issue; the final conference of the project held out online on the 26 August 2020; and the enhancement of the NCPE Equality Mark. By means of the latter initiative, companies are given the necessary assistance to adopt policies and practices on gender equality. As part of the PGEI project, an Equal Pay Tool was developed and pilot-tested, whereby nine companies inputted their employees' data into the Pay Tool. This data was then analysed by the tool's software to assess for equal pay. Following the pilot-testing phase, the tool was fine tuned to address the concerns raised during pilot-testing.

The Human Rights Directorate also recognised the International day of Women and Girls in Science in order to address the long-standing biases and gender stereotypes that are steering girls and women away from science related fields. Awareness was done via social media, and a newspaper article by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance and a video message by the Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms.¹⁰⁰

NCPE has also carried out 35 training sessions covering gender equality stereotypes and sexism. A newspaper¹⁰¹ was also published on online sexism and measures for improvement, providing insights on the Council of Europe's Recommendation on Preventing and Combating Sexism. In particular, issues on sexism on the internet and the media were raised in view of their high relevance to our everyday life, as well as in the areas of employment and education. Apart from the NCPE's website, the newsletter was disseminated to different stakeholders.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Following the publication of the article 'Online sexism and measures for improvement', the NCPE has also raised awareness on online sexism through infographics on social media and issued a press statement on online sexist hate speech. Articles and infographics were also published related to gender equality in artificial intelligence, pay discrimination, pregnancy discrimination and equality in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and on the EU Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025).

¹⁰⁰ <https://bit.ly/3fsvwmy>

¹⁰¹ <https://bit.ly/3I5M3yh>

In March 2020, the NCPE organised the first conference on AI and gender equality to mark International Women's Day. Different stakeholders, including academics, government authorities, NGOs, employers and employers' associations, participated in this conference. The conference focused on how equality can and should be mainstreamed in AI and on necessary measures to be taken to sustain an environment which is free from any form of discrimination. The conference also served as an awareness-raising tool providing an environment for discussions on experiences of working with AI and how this technology may affect gender equality.

The Hate Speech and the Hate Crime Unit was inaugurated on 24 October 2019. This unit will be specialising in fighting against hate speech and hate crime. The project is financed by the European Union in partnership with the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, the Malta Police Force, the Academy for Disciplined Forces, the Agency for Protection of Persons Seeking Asylum, the Directorate for integration and Equality, the Commission for the Rights of Disabled Persons and Victims Support Europe. The Unit will also serve as an educational campaign for individuals to acknowledge the consequences of certain online behaviour and to emphasise that hate speech is illegal in Malta.¹⁰²

The Department for Industrial and Employment Relations, continuously, collects gender disaggregated data. Through the department's main data management system, data can be accessed according to gender and hence this allows the department to meet the clients' needs and expectations to ensure that the services offered are equally accessible to male and female clients.

In relation to combating bullying, during the reporting period, the Anti-Bullying Section within the National School Support Services (NSSS) continued with their work which mainly consists of prevention and intervention. Before the schools closed due to COVID-19 in March 2020, the team held talks with different stakeholders about various topics such as:

- restorative Justice;
- awareness talks for students and teachers about multiculturalism, cyber safety and xenophobia;
- talks with guest speakers from the cyber-crime unit.

Once schools had to close, members of the team were involved in answering calls on the *Nisimgheh (I hear you)* helpline. Different members of the team worked with their respective colleges to create online awareness sessions/videos about the importance of cyber safety, what to look out for and cyber manners. During the COVID-19 lockdown the team also prepared a number of online resources to be used which were uploaded on the NSSS website.

NSSS representatives have also contributed actively in the Inter-ministerial committee on Gender-Based Violence as well as assisted in the implementation of the National Strategy on GBV and DV.

NSSS also collaborates with a number of entities to convey the message that employment opportunities are there for everyone. This collaboration is ongoing between the NSSS and the Business Professional Women (BPW) where girls are encouraged to explore and engage with sectors which are usually male dominant.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

Malta has continued its work on the implementation of its first National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence 2018-2020. A second national strategy to cover years 2021-2022 is currently being drafted. This addresses a number of GREVIO recommendations such as the need for policy measures to be more intersectional and tackle all forms of gender-based violence.

¹⁰² <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/October/24/pr192269.aspx>

2.3 Institutional changes

Following the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, the remit of the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (CDV) was broadened to address all forms of gender-based violence and domestic violence. As the co-ordinating body, the Commission is responsible for the co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

At a national level, Malta appointed its first full-time Commissioner on gender-based violence and domestic violence to lead on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention including raising awareness and to bring about multi-agency collaboration and networking among service providers.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee continued to meet in 2019 and 2020. This was set up to ensure the proper implementation of the national strategy. This Committee is made up of representatives from various government entities and meets regularly to discuss implementation, legislation, areas of concern and service provision. NGOs are invited periodically to strengthen collaboration between government and civil society.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In terms of research, the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence signed a memorandum of understanding with MCAST, an accredited post-secondary educational institution, in June 2020 to strengthen collaboration in research in the areas of gender-based violence and domestic violence.

A research study on the situation of gender-based violence in Malta and the experiences and effects at the workplace was also carried out as part of the EU co-funded project 'Victim Support Online-Improving Support Structures for Victims of Gender-Based Violence - GB-VSO'.

In addition, a national research study is being carried out to gain a better understanding of the economic cost of domestic violence in Malta. The results are expected to be made available at the beginning of 2021.

As awareness-raising campaigns, the 16 days of activism was co-ordinated by the Commission on Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence and included awareness-raising activities and initiatives organised by various government entities, NGOs and student organisations. The Commission raised awareness on social media and on several radio and television stations. Moreover, it co-ordinated several information and training sessions for professionals working in the field of gender-based violence and domestic violence. An online awareness campaign also took place in February to coincide with Valentine's day targeting dating violence.

NCPE has also carried out a campaign on violence against women for the 16 Days of Activism in 2019. It consisted of social media posts, videos, a newspaper article on the Times of Malta titled 'Women facing daily violence online',¹⁰³ and a press contribution discussing domestic violence.

A national awareness-raising campaign was also organised during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Informative posters, leaflets and business cards with the contact numbers of support services were disseminated to pharmacies, supermarkets, grocers, police stations, healthcare centres, banks and local councils. Other initiatives included the airing of radio clips on several radio stations, a bus shelter campaign and the display of GIFs on online newspapers. Through the EU co-funded project 'Breaking the Cycle of Violence', the Commission co-ordinated an online campaign and the distribution of information leaflets.

¹⁰³ <https://bit.ly/34YvIGN>

During the lockdown, national support services and NGO's provided physical and online services to provide support to victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence. Public announcements were also made by the Commission on the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence to encourage the public to report if they believe that someone is in danger and published phone numbers that people can contact for support.

With reference to the gathering of disaggregated data, the commission works in co-operation with the National Statistics Office (NSO) on a yearly harmonisation exercise of data gathered from various service providers. Regular meetings were held with NSO and the stakeholders to address gaps and improvements in the collection of data on gender-based violence and domestic violence.

Additionally, NCPE delivered 25 training sessions covering the topic of sexual harassment, which discussed definitions, legal provisions as well as practical ways to prevent and address sexual harassment and published an article on Malta Today on sexual harassment at the workplace.¹⁰⁴

2.5 Other pertinent developments

A memorandum of understanding was signed between Legal Aid Malta, the Victim Support Unit within the Malta Police Force and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services to assist persons experiencing gender-based violence and domestic violence.

The Malta Police Force launched its specialised unit for victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence. The Commission organised an induction training for the police working within this unit.

Moreover, since April 2020, the Legal Aid Agency has extended its free legal aid services to victims of domestic violence on a 24/7 basis.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

A person requesting legal aid in respect to domestic violence is eligible for free legal aid service as stipulated by Article 57 of the schedule attached to Chapter 581 of the Laws of Malta. This service was extended in April 2020, in order to ensure that legal aid is given by specially trained advocates on a 24/7 basis.

Access to justice is needless to say gender neutral. Our *Interpretation Act* confirms this also in the reading of all national legislation.

3.3 Institutional changes

Malta is now in the final stages of a process embarked upon in 2014, whereby a review of its current equality provisions led to the drafting of two legislative proposals. First, the Equality Bill,¹⁰⁵ which harmonises Maltese law on equality and non-discrimination, strengthens the legal framework, and increases legal protection for victims of discrimination. Secondly, the Commission for Human Rights and Equality Bill,¹⁰⁶ which will establish Malta's first National Human Rights Institution in line with the UN Paris Principles.

Over and above its functions as a NHRI, within this Commission there will also be an Equality Board, a quasi-judicial tribunal with the mandate to hear and decide individual cases on the alleged breach of the right to equal treatment and impose binding decisions. Both legislative measures are currently being discussed at Parliamentary Committee stage.

¹⁰⁴ <https://bit.ly/32deELh>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.parliament.mt/en/13th-leg/bills/bill-no-096-equality/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.parliament.mt/en/13th-leg/bills/bill-no-097-human-rights/>

3.5 Other pertinent developments

Ongoing review of Maltese legislation has also led to the identification of provisions which were discriminatory towards women. In October 2020, the Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms has just tabled in Parliament a Bill which will erase provisions which presently discriminate against women in the drafting of public deeds.¹⁰⁷

Taking into consideration the sensitivity of judicial process especially those involving cases of domestic violence, the victim has the possibility to testify through video conference. Moreover, the examination and cross-examination of the victim tendering evidence must be made on the same day so that the victim is only called to testify once. Remote witness facilities are in place for the safety of the victim, ensuring that the accused and the victim do not encounter each other. Moreover, recent legislative amendments have also extended the use of video conferencing in judicial process for civil cases.¹⁰⁸

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Malta's Gender Balance Reform Bill (Bill No. 119), introduces temporary positive measures necessary and reasonable in a democratic society to ensure de facto equality between men and women in politics. This bill has now been tabled before the House of Representatives.

4.2 Policy changes

In order to reconcile work and family life, Parliament has adopted a new timetable for Parliamentary Sittings. As of January 2019, all Parliamentary Sittings are held between 4pm and 7:30pm (excluding Budget Estimates Sittings). This new timetable allows elected representatives and employees to spend more time with their families.

4.3 Institutional changes

With respect to gender balance in the labour market, particularly in decision-making and headship position, 2020 has registered progress in this regard with the appointment of women in various such positions, including the Head of News at Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and the Chairperson of the PBS Board.

For the first time in Malta, during this legislature, a female was appointed as the first State Advocate following legislative amendments. Furthermore, in September 2020, for the first time, a female was also appointed as the State's Attorney General.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

An event was organised on 8 March 2020 commemorating Women's Day. Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance, Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms, and Prime Minister's wife honoured this day by visiting a photo exhibition of 12 Maltese women considered pioneers in their field. Reference was particularly made to the Gender Balance Reform proposing more seats for women in Parliament.¹⁰⁹

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The number of women registered on NCPE's Directory of Professional Women increased to 265 professionals. This initiative serves as a platform that highlights women's skills, qualifications and capabilities, to promote their visibility for appointment to decision-making roles. Moreover, NCPE published an article on the Times of Malta titled 'Gender imbalance in decision-making positions',¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.parliament.mt/en//13th-leg/motions/motion-no-437-notarial-profession-and-notarial-archives/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://parliament.mt/en/13th-leg/bills/bill-no-168-cocp-4/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://bit.ly/32cjXKK>

¹¹⁰ <https://bit.ly/32cjXKK>

highlighting how women remain under-represented in decision-making positions that shape politics, economics and society as a whole. An infographic was also shared on NCPE's Facebook page to raise awareness on NCPE's Directory of Professional Women.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Amendments to regulation 19 of the Procedural Standards for Granting and Withdrawing International Protection (S.L 420.07) have been introduced and published on 7 August 2020. By virtue of these amendments, when considering an application for refugee status, in assessing the fear of persecution, the International Protection Agency shall take into account gender and sex related aspects, including gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics for the purposes of determining membership of a particular social group or identifying a characteristic of such a group.

5.2 Policy changes

Regarding integration, the Human Rights Directorate (HRD) is carrying out an AMIF-funded project called "Learning-Exchanging-Integrating". Through this project, any male and female migrant with any status is given the chance to learn the English and Maltese languages as well as about Maltese culture. In fact, there have been more than 3,000 applicants of these courses over a period of almost two years.

Moreover, in the forums that HRD holds, namely the Forum on Intercultural Affairs and the Interfaith Integration Forum, gender-balanced representation is ensured.

In addition, the second integration pact, once enacted, will have a stronger focus on gender equality and the role of migrant women and migrant children in the Maltese society.

5.3 Institutional changes

The International Protection Agency is already acting in compliance with the abovementioned legislative amendment.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Research is an essential aspect of HRD especially regarding policymaking and for project-building. The "I Belong" Programme is promoted regularly online, including the HRD website, posters and banners, to encourage migrants to apply for the courses.

A referral system is also in place to ensure that clients can access other services that other stakeholders provide.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

As mentioned in the above section, Malta is developing its first national Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming which shall adopt a dual approach. First, the introduction of gender mainstreaming, that is, a gender perspective into all stages and all sectors of policymaking. Secondly, the commitment to direct, targeted measures to achieve full gender equality. This document shall be launched in 2021.

6.3 Institutional changes

In terms of OPM Circular No. 15/2012 entitled 'Gender Mainstreaming in Practice' issued on the 30 April 2012, the NCPE gathers annually a brief report on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the sphere of gender equality and mainstreaming from each individual government department/entity. Every year, when gathering these reports, NCPE provides all reporting officers within government departments/entities with information on gender mainstreaming and the reporting obligations, including info on NCPE gender mainstreaming tools such as a Factsheet, a Checklist for Gender Mainstreaming of Government Action and a Step-by-Step Guide for Gender Impact Assessment. Moreover, a short video showing practical examples of gender mainstreaming is also provided.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The NCPE delivered seven training sessions which covered the topic of gender mainstreaming. Training participants included students from the University of Malta who are reading for a course in public administration and public officers in two different Ministries.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

A Policy on Inclusive Education in Schools – Route to quality inclusion was issued in March 2019. It is inclusive of sexual and gender minorities. Consequently, in September 2020 the Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students in Schools policy was reviewed to integrate it the Inclusive Education Policy. The review was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) and the SOGIGESC Unit within the Human Rights Directorate.

Gender mainstreaming is one of the items on the agenda of the career guidance service within NSSS. Every career guidance initiative held for students is open to all students, boys and girls alike, irrespective of their gender. Training for career guidance practitioners in this regard was organised by NCPE in March 2019 and another edition in October 2019 which focused on the Maltese Equality Legislation, Gender Equality, Gender Stereotyping and Gender roles.

Apart from mainstream career guidance initiatives, such topics are taught in the classroom through the Personal, Social and Career Development (PSCD) subject. Career guidance initiatives complement what is taught in the classroom.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Main challenges

- Culture change and change in attitudes remains one of the challenges. Changing beliefs, attitudes and practices does not take place overnight but is a developmental process with requires time.
- The need to gain a better understanding of gender mainstreaming and its implementation in various sector
- Limited statistical data and research
- Impunity at Criminal Court
- Inadequate human, technical and financial investments.

Lessons learned

- Provision of training
- Education and raising awareness

8. Additional comments, if any

The Department for Industrial Relations (DIER) welcomes additional expertise on communicating gender mainstreaming in relation to the conditions of work, how to develop gender equality practices and ways of improving the quantity and quality of jobs for a balance between efficiency goals and equity. The Employment and Industrial Relations Act regulates the equal pay for equal work provision and maintains that employees in the same class of employment are entitled to the same rate of remuneration for work of equal value (Article 27, Employment and Industrial Relations Act of 2002).

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.4 Research and awareness raising

With the support of UN Women, an online instrument to collect the cases of sexism, sexist and hate speech, violence against women in elections (VAWE) has been developed. During the electoral campaign for Presidential elections, public at large had the opportunity to report the case of sexism and VAWE on the online platform <https://gender.monitor.md/>, as well as monitoring of the campaign by independent monitors was conducted. A report on monitoring will be developed by end-2020. The platform will further serve as a tool to report gender-based discrimination, sexism and sexist speech.

Society at large is more informed about the successes and barriers faced by women with disabilities who ran for local elections. In this respect, three documentary movies representing the stories of three women with disabilities who ran for local elections in 2019 were launched within the International Documentary Movies Festival Moldox in Cahul, on 9 September. The broadcasting of the documentaries was followed by discussions with protagonists, documentaries' director and the representative of Central Electoral Commission. The documentaries were produced by UN Women in partnership with LTD Niste Filme.

The Classification of Occupations is under revision in order to include both masculine and feminine versions for each function and profession, with support provided by UN Women.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Between February 2020 and July 2022, the Eastern European Foundation (FEE) and the Partnership Centre for Development (CPD), in collaboration with the Council for the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Equality, implements the project "for better protection against discrimination", funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Government of Sweden.

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen Moldova's anti-discrimination mechanisms through the involvement of civil society. A study by the Development Partnership Centre shows that women often face various forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, with about 20% of these cases taking place in higher education institutions. For this reason, one of the main objectives of the project aims at increasing the capacity of the five universities of the country to prevent and combat sexual harassment.

In the spring of 2020, the selection process took place of the five universities that would like, through joint effort, capacity building and the development of effective mechanisms, to prevent and combat sexual harassment in higher education. The selected universities are: Academy of Economic Studies (ASEM), Technical University of Moldova (UTM), Free International University (ULIM), State University "Alecu Russo" in Balti, (USARB) State Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga" in Chisinau (UPSC).

Between June and August 2020, the working methodology was developed with 5 selected universities on preventing and combating the phenomenon of sexual harassment. The concept provides an overview of the proposed methodology and intervention to prevent/reduce sexual harassment in educational institutions, the main areas of intervention, quality standards for each prevention and investigation of cases of sexual harassment, tools for evaluating internal policies and procedures that address sexual harassment in universities.

Starting with September, the selected universities together with the team of the Partnership Centre for Development (CPD) has started to carry out the following activities:

- Conducting out a research within the higher education institutions - which aims to identify the prevalence of the phenomenon of sexual harassment, perceptions and attitudes of the academic community, existing protection measures, etc.
- Developing the capacities of the academic community within five universities (students and academic staff) to prevent and combat the phenomenon of sexual harassment in the education system - involves the organisation of seminars/training sessions for students, sessions/working meetings with representatives of the human resources department on education policies for preventing and combating sexual harassment in educational institutions.
- Support for improving the internal regulations and procedures of five higher education institutions (this included: reviewing and adjusting internal procedures and documents, developing an action plan to prevent and combat sexual harassment, carrying out actions to prevent and combat the phenomenon.).
- Carrying out the activity for information and awareness of society on the phenomenon of sexual harassment in target universities: conducting information campaigns, organising debates and public discussions in universities on sexual harassment and reporting mechanisms, dissemination of information to the other educational institutions.
- Exchange of good practices - organising events for the exchange of experience and good practices between educational institutions of different levels (professional, professional-technical, tertiary, etc.).

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

I. During the reporting period, the parliament adopted two draft laws that ensure the adjustment of national legislation to the international provisions in the field and improve the mechanisms for the protection of victims of domestic violence and for the monitoring of perpetrators.

Law No. 113/2020 - comes with new provisions that consecutively amend three laws (Law No. 45/2007 on preventing and combating domestic violence, Law No. 198/2007 on legal assistance guaranteed by the state, Law No. 8/2008 on probation) and aims at:

- strengthening and streamlining the mechanism for reporting by professionals of cases of domestic violence and referring victims to specialised services; the inclusion of emergency restriction measures, in the circumstances requiring the issuance by the police of the emergency restriction order for the perpetrators; increased accessibility to legal services guaranteed by the state for victims of domestic violence and sexual violence, from the stage of filing the complaint; the obligation of the perpetrators to participate in programmes to reduce violent behaviour, in all cases of conviction for domestic violence.

Law No. 85/2020 - this project included electronic monitoring of perpetrators, thus amending Framework Law No. 8/2008 on probation, Code of Criminal Procedure, Code of Civil Procedure, Code of Execution, Law No. 45/2007 on preventing and combating domestic violence.

The new approved regulations represent an important step in improving and adjusting the legislation in the field, which will help reduce the effects of domestic violence and ensure greater protection for victims, as well as ensuring respect for their rights and legitimate interests.

In order to strengthen the material and procedural rights of victims of crimes against the freedom and sexual inviolability of the person, the Ministry of Justice, in partnership with the International Centre "La Strada" and independently experts, has drafted a law in accordance with the standards established by the Istanbul Convention and the Lanzarote Convention. On 20 February 2020, the project was submitted for examination to all competent institutions. During the months of June-September 2020, several working meetings and debates were organised with different actors

interested in the respective changes. The project has been finalised to be sent at the end of the year to the government for approval.

II. The Ministry of Justice drafted a law proposing the criminalisation of crimes by reason of hate and prejudice. The draft law was adopted by the parliament in its first reading and in the first semester of 2020, several public debates were organised on the draft law by the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Appointments and Immunities. So, after being finalised, based on received proposals and objections, it will be presented to the plenary of the parliament for adoption in the final reading.

III. Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Interior Affairs (MIA) approved the Regulation to prevent and combat sexual harassment, after being adjusted as per each institution's needs. Thus, the Regulation was approved by Ministry of Defence on 7 July 2020 and by Ministry of Interior Affairs - on 4 September 2020, entering into effect immediately.

<https://cuvintul.md/22539/ministerul-apararii-intreprind-masuri-interne-de-prevenire-si-combatere-a-fenomenului-hartuirii-sexuale/>

https://www.facebook.com/unwomenmoldova/posts/1605360826287407?comment_id=1606201876203302

2.2 Policy changes

1. The 2nd monitoring report on the degree of implementation of the Action Plan for 2018 of the National Strategy for the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence was prepared. Among the positive achievements we notice:

- Approval of the Government Decision no. 716/2019 regarding the acceptance of the draft law for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, adopted on 11 May 2011;
- Elaboration of three draft laws on amending normative acts (harmonisation of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and the Lanzarote Convention) and adoption by the Parliament of two drafts (Law 113/2020 and Law 8/2020);
- Approval by the Ministry of Health, Labour, Social Protection (MHLSP) of the Order No. 903 of 29 July 2019 regarding the Instruction on the intervention of territorial social assistance structures in cases of domestic violence;
- Approval by the MHLSP of the Order No. 1167 of 15 October 2019 regarding the Instruction on the intervention of medical institutions in cases of domestic violence;
- Ensuring the maintenance of the free hotline Assistance Service for victims of domestic violence and violence against women from state budget resources;
- Carrying out the study on social services in the field of preventing and combating gender-based violence, with the financial support of UN Women Moldova, Public Association "Centre for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities";
- Conducting information campaigns in the field focused on different target groups.

2. Elaboration of the Instruction on the mechanism of intersectoral co-operation in cases of domestic violence, in order to ensure an efficient, prompt and comprehensive response to cases of domestic violence of all governmental authorities with competences in the field.

3. In times of crisis such as the COVID-19 outbreak, women and girls have also proved to be at higher risk of intimate partner violence and other forms of domestic violence due to increased tensions in the household.

Guided by international resources drafted as a response to the increased request of the community based shelters across the countries for accurate information and guidance on how to plan, prepare and respond to this emerging public health threat, the Moldovan anti-violence community developed practical recommendations on how to deal with domestic violence cases during the pandemic.

These recommendations are intended for professionals with expertise in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence, as well as victims and potential victims of violence, including domestic violence, in order to ensure effective interventions in cases of violence in the context of COVID-19.

https://www.Council_of_Europe.int/en/web/genderequality/promoting-and-protecting-women-s-rights#

2.3 Institutional changes

In order to implement activities 3.2.7 and 2.2.2/2.2.3 of the Action Plan for 2018-2020 for the implementation of the National Strategy for preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence for 2018-2023 under the auspices of the MIA/General Police Inspectorate (GPI) two working groups have been set up:

1. Working Group to develop inter-sectoral mechanism for monitoring and analysis of criminal cases related to domestic violence, resulting in death or serious injury to the bodily integrity of the victims. The group is a common platform of representatives of government institutions (MIA, GPI, MHLSP, Forensic Medicine Centre, General Prosecutor Office, People's Advocate Office) and those from civil society (National Coalition Life without Violence, Centre for Women Rights, La Strada International Organisation). In the group platform, the following were developed and approved:
 - the activity plan of the group;
 - the concept of the inter-sectoral mechanism for monitoring and analysing criminal cases related to domestic violence, resulting in death or serious injury to the bodily integrity of the victims;
 - summary of international practices regarding the establishment and functioning of commissions for the analysis of cases of domestic violence resulting in death;
 - drafting the Government Decision on the establishment of the inter-sectoral commission for monitoring and analysis of criminal cases related to domestic violence, resulting in death or serious injury to the bodily integrity of victims and the Regulation on the functioning of the commission.
2. Working group to develop methodology and working instructions for the sexual violence response team. The group developed and finalised the abovementioned methodology.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In the field of collection and diversification data on violence against women and domestic violence:

1. During the year, the analysis of statistical data was carried out in cases of violence against women and domestic violence in the judicial sector, reported to both victims and aggressors, which are held/or can be generated/systematised by:

- a) Courts Administration Agency
- b) National Probation Inspectorate
- c) National Administration of Penitentiaries
- d) National Council for State Guaranteed Legal Aid

The conclusions and recommendations of the report will be used for improving the administrative data collection process of the institutions and diversifying the statistical indicators.

2. In 2019-2020, the Centre for Women Rights, in partnership with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) prepared and presented the Evaluation Report "Statistical indicators on sexual and reproductive health and on gender-based violence in the health system of the Republic of Moldova". The purpose of the report was to identify and analyse statistical indicators in the health system in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence at national and international level and to

recommend statistical indicators on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence for the system of health care in the Republic of Moldova. Thus, the group of experts developed a set of statistical indicators on cases of domestic violence and victims of violence who received medical services; the draft statistical report; the register and the calculation and control methodology and developed an automated collection, processing and data generation. MHLSP examines the recommended set and will decide on the opportunity to integrate the recommendations in the Automated Information System "Primary Health Care" (SIA AMP) and the Automated Information System "Hospital Health Care" (SIA AMS). By carrying out this project and implementing the recommendations, tools will be obtained to collect relevant indicators and data aimed at improving policies in the field of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the health sector.

3. Between May and July 2020, UN Women Moldova, in collaboration with the International Centre "La Strada" Moldova, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, and with the financial support of Sweden, conducted a rapid assessment to understand the impact of the crisis on women affected by violence in the family, analyses the challenges of the systemic response to cases of domestic violence and identify possible systemic changes needed to cope with crisis situations.

During the rapid evaluation, 55 interviews were conducted with the participation of women affected by domestic violence, professionals from the member organisations of the National Coalition "Life without domestic violence", representatives of the justice system and the Centre for Forensic Medicine. Among the main needs of women affected by domestic violence were mentioned not only the basic necessities and other financial needs, but also the need to find shelter, as well as access to health care, psychological counselling and legal assistance. Also, due to the restrictive measures imposed by the pandemic, women face a significant reduction in purchasing power, increased pressure generated by the closure of kindergartens and the transition to online schooling, as well as limited access to services or authorities and measures to protection against COVID-19. The report also comes with some recommendations aimed at improving the systemic response to the needs of victims of domestic violence and their children, identified in this evaluation. Among the main recommendations are: providing institutions with individual goods of protection, appropriate technical endowment of centres for victims of domestic violence, ensuring the availability and diversification of services focused on the needs of the victim, diversification of accommodation services (social apartments, crisis housing, etc.), expanding and diversifying economic empowerment programmes for women affected by domestic violence and others.

4. A new publication entitled "Advancing towards the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention: good practices from states parties" has just been published. This study has been prepared under the framework of the project "Awareness-raising activities on the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova".

The study was developed to support the Moldovan authorities in their path to ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

https://www.Council_of_Europe.int/en/web/genderequality/-/supporting-member-states-in-their-process-of-ratification-of-the-istanbul-convention

5. The Republic of Moldova has taken the following measures to ratify the Istanbul Convention:
- was elaborated and approved by Government Decision No. 716/2019 the draft law for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, adopted on 11 May 2011. The draft was subsequently sent to Parliament for consideration and adoption. The draft is currently under examination by the Parliamentary Committees.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

A total of 207 women local and district councillors in their first mandate have better capacities to apply gender equality and human rights principles in their work duties, due to their participation in complex capacity-building programme organised by Centre Contract, contracted by UN Women. The programme is composed of 19 2-day training sessions divided in two modules. 178 participants undertook homework assignments to apply the obtained knowledge. Coached by mentors in undertaking the homework, the participants initiated projects for their communities, assessed the accessibility of public buildings, or developed drafts of local decisions, including from gender equality perspective, etc.

Participants increased their knowledge in such areas, as gender equality and human rights, the competences and duties of LPAs, public speaking, fundraising, leadership skills, collaboration between political parties and LPAs, conflict resolution, budgetary processes and GRB. As a result, 27 small community initiatives were developed and implemented by the participants, with financial support of Centre Contact and UN Women.

A total of 85 women mayors at their first mandate shared the challenges and issues they faced in the context of COVID-19 outbreak, as well as shared the best practices to overcome the difficulties caused by the pandemic situation. A round table in this regard took place on 31 July, organised by UN Women in partnership with Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM), aimed at identifying the needs of women mayors at the first mandate as a result of the virus spread. As a result of identified issues, during August-November, women mayors at first mandate benefit of individual guidance on how to address any challenges that may be encountered in the context of COVID-19, including reopening of kindergartens and schools.

80 newly elected women mayors and 29 women mayors at second mandate have better capacities in functioning of local public administration and gender mainstreaming at local level due to their participation within 6 online training sessions conducted in 2020 by Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM), contracted by UN Women. Participants enhanced their knowledge in such areas, like gender equality and leadership, local economic development - successful way of developing the locality, fundraising activities for local initiatives, including partnerships at local level and decentralised co-operation, gender mainstreaming in projects, labour activity and social guarantees within LPAs of the Republic of Moldova, including during the pandemic, communication, the use of communication tools in the LPA activity during physical distancing for remote activity, budget process at local level, gender-responsive budgeting, general characteristic of the Local Public Administration system, competences roles and responsibilities.

Up to 60 women and men leaders (as unique participants) at local level have better knowledge on Public Services Management and Strategic Planning, due to their participation within two online workshops, organised by IVC and Contact Cahul, RPs engaged by UN Women on a PCA basis. The training was organised on 3 and 16 July, bringing 56 participants on the first day and 52 participants on the second day. The particular focus of both training sessions was to improve the participants' competences and ensure good governance and transparent decision-making processes throughout their activity as leaders.

Up to 100 civil servants at district level will have better capacities to mainstream gender equality in developed decisions, plans and budgets due to their participation within a capacity building programme, due to their participation within five 2-day capacity-building sessions. Up to 23 women heads and deputy heads of districts will receive support in COVID-19 context. This support is provided by Academy of Public Administration, in partnership with UN Women.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted Law No. 139 of 16 July 2020 for the amendment of some normative acts, through which amendments were made to Law No. 274/2011 on the integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova. Among the innovations introduced are the following:

- expanding the categories of foreigners who have access to integration measures. In particular, the holders are: the right of temporary residence for voluntary activities; for the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings; for the protection of victims of domestic violence; for other purposes, in which the activity of the alien does not contravene the legislation of the Republic of Moldova or his presence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova is necessary in the public interest or national security; for activities in the field of information technology, foreign investors; people with management positions; specialists; graduates of higher education;
- review of the integration activities which including specialised information sessions, socio-cultural accommodation sessions, state language courses, information/counselling on ways to access the labour market, guidance and training services to facilitate economic integration, information/counselling on obtaining the citizenship of the Republic of Moldova;
- granting state allowances for the study of the state language (level A1-A2);
- determined the attributions of the responsible authorities, the way of interaction and the methodologies necessary to be elaborated in order to ensure the practical implementation;
- specified the way in which access to education, medical services, assistance and social security is ensured, setting out the respective exceptions and restrictions;
- extended access to the labour market for all categories of foreigners in the country (such as the stranger's family members), with the aim of creating opportunities for self-maintenance;
- introduced provisions that directly target minors in order to ensure respect for children's rights, etc.

Foreigners who have obtained international protection or political asylum in the Republic of Moldova (unaccompanied minors, single-parent families with children, families with three or more dependent children, people with disabilities, pregnant women, victims of trafficking in human beings, people with intellectual problems and mental health, as well as persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, psychological or sexual violence, persons who have reached retirement age) and, at the same time, have a reduced potential for self-maintenance, conditioned by objective factors and independent of their will, will benefit from equal and equitable access to assistance as the citizens of the Republic of Moldova, under the conditions of the legislation.

The process of integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova is carried out in compliance with the principle of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child and equal treatment. Integration measures for foreigners is done by assessing each case.

The new legislative provisions will enter into force on 1 January 2021.

5.3 Institutional changes

The Office for Migration and Asylum has developed the Practical Guide on Assessing the Needs of Asylum Seekers in a Vulnerable Situation and referring them to the competent authorities. The guide has been developed to provide information and guidelines to the responsible authorities on the principles, rights, legal framework, communication and procedural issues to be followed when assessing the needs of vulnerable asylum seekers and referring them to the competent authorities.

The guide is applicable to asylum seekers whose asylum application has not been resolved by an irrevocable decision and is addressed to employees of the competent authorities who, within the limits of their functional responsibilities, interact with asylum seekers.

The guide covers children, unaccompanied children, people with disabilities, the elderly, pregnant women, single parents with children, victims of human trafficking, people with serious illnesses, people with mental illnesses and people who have been subjected to torture, rape or other forms of serious psychological, physical or sexual violence, or in other special situations.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

Initiatives put in place by Republic of Moldova to counter the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on women's rights and gender equality. The major priority during the COVID-19 pandemic was primarily, as a country strategy, to take measures to stop the spread of this infection and to prepare the health system for a prompt, efficient and appropriate response. At the same time, another dimension of concern was the economic/financial support of the population during the pandemic period following the declaration of the emergency situation. It is necessary to point out that not only for the field of gender equality, this situation/this pandemic has brought certain challenges and difficulties to achieve, all areas of economic and social activity have been affected and certain actions have been taken by each sector to remedy the situation. Decisions taken with an impact on gender equality can be found on the following link:

https://www.Council_of_Europe.int/en/web/genderequality/promoting-and-protecting-women-s-rights#

6.4 Research and awareness raising

1. Within the Project "Strengthening the national statistical system" implemented by the National Bureau of Statistics with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) and the Government of Sweden, the following analyses were developed:

- Analytical report on the participation of women and men in entrepreneurship, 2020. The purpose of this analytical study is to inform the public, based on evidence/thematic data, about the participation, role and performance of women and men in entrepreneurship. The study presents a multi-aspectual analysis of female entrepreneurship in the Republic of Moldova. It addresses through gender perspectives the socio-demographic characteristics of entrepreneurs, the stages of starting and running a business, access to finance and property, economic performance, innovation and use of information technology in enterprises. Information is also provided on staff employed in companies, the presence of women, labour productivity and the level of remuneration. The study assesses the perception of entrepreneurs about the business environment in Moldova, future objectives, as well as the main obstacles to business. The analysis also aimed to identify barriers to female entrepreneurship depending on economic activity, the size of the enterprise and the characteristics of entrepreneurs. The analysis is based on the results of the research on the development of the business environment conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2018. At the same time, a comparative analysis is offered with the situation from 2009, when the NBS developed the first national study in the field of female entrepreneurship.

<https://statistica.gov.md/pageview.php?!=ro&idc=350&id=6723>

- The study "Women and men in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector" aims to inform the public, based on evidence/data, about the participation and role of women and men in the ICT sector. The paper covers six areas: ICT education, employment in the ICT sector, working conditions in the ICT sector, research and development in the field of ICT, entrepreneurship and leadership in the ICT sector, access and use of ICT by the population. It contains the analysis of the situation in the above-mentioned areas, identifies the ICT areas where gender disparities are

encountered, the socio-economic factors that determine those differences, the underlying causes of problems in the sector, opportunities as untapped potential and limitations as development impediments. Based on the identified findings, are formulated conclusions and recommendations to close the gap between women and men and capitalise on the transformative potential of ICT for women's empowerment (including girls).

<https://statistica.gov.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=6544>

2. Feasibility study on the implementation of special temporary measures and reasonable accommodation for the promotion of gender equality in the Internal Affairs and Defence sector "Beyond the Status Quo!" was developed by the Partnership Centre for Development in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, under the Collaboration Agreement and funded by Sweden. The feasibility study aims to examine in more depth the specific barriers to women's participation in the security and defence sectors, with a focus on structural issues that prevent women's inclusion, as well as identifying specific solutions to overcome these applicable and realistic barriers, taking into account the context and realities of the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, it evaluates possible special temporary and reasonable accommodation measures for the promotion of gender equality in the Internal Affairs and Defence sector in the following areas: physical requirements and gender dimension, recruitment and admission, promotion and vertical segregation, working hours, family responsibilities, infrastructure.

<http://www.progen.md/?pag=n&tip=publicatii&l=>

3. The assessment "COVID-19 impact on gender equality and women's empowerment in Moldova" was conducted by UN Women and the Centre Partnership for Development and financed by Sweden, April-June 2020. The data were collected by the Centre for Sociological Research and Marketing "CBS-AXA". UN Women supported the development of a study composed of 4 briefs, based on a survey conducted among 1003 respondents. The briefs covering following topics: "(Invisible) Care crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic: Assessment of the pandemic crisis impact on the gender roles in care and women empowerment"; "Unequal transition to work during the pandemic: A Gender Analysis of the Pandemic Crisis Impact on Employment Opportunities for Moldovan Women and Men", "Unequal impact: An Analysis of the Pandemic Crisis Impact on the Level of Well-Being of Women and Men" and "Financial vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic: A Gender Analysis of the Pandemic Crisis Impact on the Income of Moldovan Women and Men" were produced by UN Women, in partnership with Centre Partnership for Development. The briefs come to summarise the findings of a needs-assessment exercise to measure immediate and long-term impact of COVID-19 from a gender perspective.

http://www.progen.md/files/2356_analiza_impactului_COVID-19_asupra_rolurilor_de_gen.pdf

4. The immediate and long-term impact of COVID-19 outbreak from gender equality perspective on Roma population was assessed. UN Women, in partnership with National Roma Centre, supported development of a study aimed at assessing what was the different impact of COVID-19 on Roma women and men from following perspective: care work, impact on employment, well-being and domestic violence, impact on financial situation. The survey was conducted on a sample of 200 Roma persons and the answers were collected by Romani women community mediators. Four cards with the main findings were developed and shared on UN Women's Facebook page widely. The findings from the report were used by the National Roma Centre to develop a letter with recommendations for authorities on the initiatives to be undertaken to reduce gender inequalities in Roma community, especially during pandemic.

<https://moldova.unwomen.org/en/noutati-si-evenimente/noutati/2020/09/roma-women>

5. 56 women and men with disabilities benefited of support programme in the context of COVID19, which was composed of individual psychological sessions (online and phone based) and online group informative sessions. Out of these participants,

- 14 women requested only telephone or online support from psychologists;
- 31 women participated in at least one online session;
- 2 women joined later to online sessions (in the second decade of June);
- 11 women were available only for the first contact with the psychologist.

Out of all 56 participants, 31 women with disabilities benefited of 18 informative online sessions on how to cope with emotional burden caused by COVID-19, the reducing the discrimination in the COVID-19 context, the rights of employer and employees in pandemic time, how to use ICT to communicate in pandemic time, etc.

One easy-read material (in Romanian and Russian) and one audio spot (in Romanian and Russian) about maintaining mental health, developing harmonious relationships and overcoming tensions in families, especially during crisis situations, such as the pandemic situation of COVID-19 were developed and shared on social media and to people with disabilities. The audio spot was broadcast on few radio stations.

Easy-read: <https://moldova.unwomen.org/ro/biblioteca-digitala/publicatii/2020/06/suport-informatiional-pentru-femeile-cu-dizabilitati>

Audio spot: <http://motivatie.md/index.php?pag=news&id=1060&rid=1511&l=ro>

Five cards with easy-read information (in Romanian and Russian) based on easy-read material about maintaining mental health, developing harmonious relationships and overcoming tensions in families, especially during crisis situations, such as the pandemic situation of COVID-19 were developed in and disseminated on UN Women and Motivatie Facebook pages.

https://www.facebook.com/pg/unwomenmoldova/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1575039992652824&ref=page_internal

As a result of their participation in the programme, women with disabilities developed a press release with recommendations to the public authorities about the measures to be taken to support people with disabilities to respond to COVID-19 outbreak.

<http://motivatie.md/index.php?pag=news&id=1060&rid=1528&l=ro>

6. The socio-economic impact assessment of COVID-19 in the Republic of Moldova was led by UNDP, conducted with UNFPA, and in close collaboration with the rest of UN System agencies. As part of the UN's response to the pandemic, UNDP Moldova is leading a UNDP Task Team on Socio-Economic Impact, which aims to support the Government, donor community and wider audience in assessing the immediate and projecting the medium-term and long-term impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Besides health effects, COVID-19 pandemic will have significant negative social and economic consequences. The lockdown has already put tremendous strains on the Moldovan labour market, has hardly hit local businesses, and has affected vulnerable groups, including those heavily relying on remittances.

Moldovan women will be even more affected, as they are in frontline domains that will be impacted the most from COVID-19, such as medical or educational sector or industries that had to close because of the pandemic.

It is, therefore, important to understand the extent of the effects of COVID-19 pandemic in order to prepare evidence-based measures to mitigate this impact.

7. As an immediate offer of support to the Republic of Moldova, the United Nations in collaboration with the Government developed a Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan, with an 18-month horizon (June 2020 to December 2021) based upon ongoing assessments for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19. This updated Plan has been peer-reviewed by a cross-section of development partners and government officials to ensure properly sequenced

priorities and overall policy coherence. The socio-economic response framework consists of five strategic pillars to protect the needs and rights of people living under the effects of the pandemic, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable and marginalised groups and individuals, and those at risk of being left behind:

- 1) Health first
- 2) People protection
- 3) Economic response & recovery
- 4) Macroeconomic response
- 5) Social cohesion & community resilience.

<https://moldova.un.org/en/93768-united-nations-moldova-covid-19-socio-economic-response-and-recovery-plan-updated-version>

MONACO

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

S'agissant des changements législatifs dans le domaine de l'égalité des sexes, on signalera l'adoption de la loi n° 1.493 du 8 juillet 2020 instituant un régime de prestations familiales en faveur des travailleurs indépendants, laquelle a abandonné la notion de « *chef de foyer* » - autour de laquelle s'articulent les autres régimes de prestations sociales et qui est généralement attribuée aux pères des enfants - au profit de celle plus neutre d'« *allocataire* », qui est attribuée par des critères neutres en application de l'Ordonnance Souveraine n° 8.200 du 24 juillet 2020 portant application de la loi instituant un régime de prestations familiales en faveur des travailleurs indépendants.

Par ailleurs, l'on relèvera à titre plus prospectif, que sous l'impulsion du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes créé à Monaco le 25 octobre 2018 (cf. réponse au point détaillée 1.3), le Gouvernement Princier, a entrepris une réflexion visant à *recenser l'ensemble des textes de droit monégasque (près de 12 000) pour identifier les dispositions dites « obsolètes »*. Pour mémoire, l'ambition consistant à appréhender l'« obsolescence » ainsi mise exergue trouve notamment son origine dans la recommandation, adressée à la Principauté dans le cadre de l'Examen périodique universel mené par le Conseil des droits de l'homme des Nations Unies, demandant aux autorités monégasques de « *Continuer de mettre en œuvre des politiques visant à la réalisation de l'égalité des sexes pleine et effective, notamment en modifiant ou en abrogeant les dispositions obsolètes dans les lois qui sont discriminatoires à l'égard des femmes* ».

Enfin, on rappellera que le cadre législatif général à Monaco assure l'égalité des sexes :

- la Constitution du 17 septembre 1962, révisée le 2 avril 2002, garantit le respect des libertés et des droits fondamentaux aux individus quel que soit leur sexe ;
- les traités internationaux auxquels la Principauté de Monaco est partie interdisent la discrimination fondée sur le sexe (Convention européenne des droits de l'homme, Convention d'Istanbul sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique, Convention sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes, etc.) ;
- - au niveau de la loi, l'égalité des sexes est assurée notamment en droit du travail, où les textes imposent le principe de l'égalité de salaire entre hommes et femmes (loi n° 739 du 16 mars 1963 sur le salaire, modifiée par la loi n° 948 du 19 avril 1974) et sanctionnent le harcèlement, le chantage sexuel et la violence au travail (loi n° 1.457 du 12 décembre 2017 relative au harcèlement et la violence au travail). En ce qui concerne le secteur public, la loi n° 975 en date du 12 juillet 1975 portant statut des fonctionnaires de l'Etat consacre également le principe de non-discrimination entre les sexes.

1.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

S'agissant des politiques publiques en matière d'égalité des sexes sur le lieu de travail ou au sujet de l'indépendance économique des femmes, on notera :

- la poursuite de l'étude sur les éventuelles inégalités salariales entre les hommes et les femmes à Monaco, dans le secteur privé comme dans le secteur public. Cette étude est menée dans le cadre d'un groupe de travail du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes, intitulé « Etudes et statistiques », auquel participe la Direction du Travail sous l'égide de l'Institut Monégasque de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (I.M.S.E.E.). C'est en fonction des résultats que pourront être envisagées les politiques publiques les plus appropriées pour corriger

les inégalités qui seraient constatées en fonction de leur importance, de leur origine ou de leur ampleur. Le résultat sera publié dans le courant de l'année 2021 ;

- la signature, le 6 novembre 2019, par le Gouvernement Princier et les employeurs de la Principauté, d'une Charte pour l'égalité des hommes et des femmes dans le monde du travail intitulée « *Monégalité* ». Cette charte met en place une nouvelle dynamique pour promouvoir l'égalité femmes/hommes et témoigner de l'attachement des employeurs à ce « facteur de performance économique et de progrès social » (extrait du préambule de la Charte).

1.3 changements institutionnels

Pour mémoire, un Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes a été créé à Monaco le 25 octobre 2018. Il a pour mission de coordonner, mettre en œuvre et évaluer les politiques nationales prises afin de promouvoir l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et de lutter contre les violences et discriminations à leur égard. Ce Comité est créé en conformité avec les recommandations des organismes de suivi internationaux en matière de droits des femmes.

Il est composé des représentants des instances gouvernementales concernées, des Services Judiciaires et d'une déléguée interministérielle. Les entités institutionnelles monégasques ainsi que les représentants des associations œuvrant dans le domaine des droits des femmes participent également à ses travaux.

Institué auprès du Ministre d'Etat, il est présidé par le Conseiller de Gouvernement – Ministre des Relations Extérieures et de la Coopération. La déléguée interministérielle a pour mission de préparer, animer les travaux et mettre en œuvre les recommandations et orientations du Comité.

A ce titre, des groupes de travail thématiques ont été définis afin de permettre aux participants de se réunir régulièrement pour mettre en place des mesures concrètes. Un de ces groupes est consacré à la prévention et l'éducation à l'égalité. Son objectif est de sensibiliser le grand public et les jeunes à la question de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et de lutter contre le sexisme.

Ainsi, une campagne de communication annuelle sera lancée en 2021 pour impliquer davantage les hommes dans les droits des femmes.

1.5 autres développements pertinents

Concernant la prévention et la lutte contre le sexisme et les stéréotypes de genre dans le cadre des mesures prises au sein de la Direction de l'Education Nationale, Jeunesse et Sports, on notera :

- la persistance : de l'action pédagogique, via l'enseignement de l'Education Morale et Civique ; de l'attention portée à la représentation paritaire dans la création des supports pédagogiques ; de la formation des personnels en matière de prévention et de sensibilisation ;
- l'aggravation des sanctions prévues dans les règlements intérieurs des établissements à l'encontre de manquements envers autrui sur tout élément personnel lié aux race, origine, croyances, handicap, orientation et sexe, notamment ;
- la mise en place de nombreuses activités périscolaires, sous diverses formes : représentation théâtrale pour l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes ; concours d'écriture numérique francophone portant sur l'égalité entre filles et garçons ; campagne photographique des visages de l'égalité du monde du travail, en vue de sensibiliser filles et garçons aux divers métiers.

Par ailleurs, le Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes, la Direction de la Communication et la Direction de la Sûreté Publique (Police) ont pris part à la réalisation d'une série

de reportages diffusés sur la chaîne de TV *Monaco info*. Ces reportages portaient sur les femmes qui occupent des postes à responsabilité au sein de la Sûreté Publique afin de montrer la féminisation de la police monégasque et la diversité des métiers qui la compose.

Enfin, dans le but d'impliquer et de sensibiliser l'Administration à l'égalité femmes/hommes au travail, le Comité a réalisé des vidéos. Le projet baptisé « *Egalité, j'écris ton nom* » consistait à interviewer des fonctionnaires et agents de l'Etat témoignant sur l'égalité femmes/hommes au travail. Les vidéos ont été par la suite diffusées sur le réseau social de l'Administration « *Workplace* » de septembre à novembre 2020.

2. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 changements législatifs

S'agissant des changements législatifs en matière de lutte contre les violences domestiques, on citera :

- la loi n° 1.478 du 12 novembre 2019 portant modification de certaines dispositions relatives aux peines a modifié l'article 238-1 du Code pénal, lequel prévoit désormais que les violences n'ayant entraîné aucune maladie ou incapacité totale de travail relèveront de la matière correctionnelle lorsqu'elles auront été commises à raison du sexe de la victime. De plus, l'article 239 nouveau du Code pénal prévoit que les peines prévues par les articles 236 (violences ayant entraîné une incapacité totale de travail supérieure à huit jours, violences ayant entraîné une mutilation ou la mort sans intention de la donner), 237 (violences prévues à l'article 236 commises avec guet-apens ou préméditation) et 238 du Code pénal (violences ayant entraîné une incapacité totale de travail inférieure ou égale à huit jours), seront aggravées si ces violences ont été commises à raison du sexe de la victime.
- le projet de loi n° 1027 portant réforme des dispositions relatives à l'incrimination des agressions sexuelles, déposé en Séance Publique le 25 novembre 2020. Le projet de loi portant réforme des dispositions relatives à l'incrimination des agressions sexuelles a été élaboré en regard de la dimension éminemment évolutive de la violence à l'égard des femmes, poursuivant une démarche ininterrompue d'actualisation des disciplines répressives, au titre des réactions nécessaires aux nouveaux défis criminels. A l'effet de perfectionner et/ou moderniser certaines infractions, ce projet de loi a eu pour premier objectif de donner toute son efficacité à la répression des atteintes sexuelles, en procédant à une redéfinition des éléments constitutifs et des peines (redéfinition de l'infraction d'outrage public à la pudeur, par le biais de l'introduction de l'incrimination d' « exhibition sexuelle », redéfinition de l'infraction d'harcèlement sexuel, redéfinition de l'actuelle infraction d' « attentat à la pudeur », par le recours à la formulation d' « atteinte sexuelle », redéfinition de l'appréhension pénale du viol, redéfinition de l'agression sexuelle, etc.). En sus de l'ensemble de ces premières modifications, il importe de souligner que le texte projeté a également pour ambition de procéder à une avancée notable pour les victimes, conduisant en cela à opérer un réel changement de paradigme. Il est en effet apparu essentiel que la définition juridique des viols et des autres agressions sexuelles puisse, désormais, être fondée sur l'absence de consentement de la victime. Elaboré en regard « *Rapport d'évaluation de référence sur Monaco* » publié par le GREVIO le 27 septembre 2017, comme en considération, au niveau onusien, du rapport unique valant rapport initial et deuxième et troisième rapports périodiques de Monaco devant le CEDAW (du 22 novembre 2017), le projet de texte répond ainsi à l'appel formé le Secrétaire Générale du Conseil de l'Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, à l'avant-veille du 8 mars 2020 (date de la journée internationale de la femme), invitant « *tous les États membres à changer leur définition juridique du viol* » ;
- l'avant-projet de loi relative à l'amélioration de la prise en charge de la personne par les professionnels de santé et les professionnels de l'action médico-sociale ou sociale, également en cours d'élaboration. Ce texte vise à faciliter l'échange d'informations confidentielles entre

plusieurs professionnels de santé ou de l'action sociale prenant en charge une même personne, afin de mieux coordonner leurs actions. Un tel échange d'informations peut être notamment utile dans le cadre de la prise en charge des femmes violentées.

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

S'agissant des procédures de police générales, on pourra noter ce qui suit :

- en matière de soutien aux victimes basé sur une intervention de « Police Secours », dans le cas d'un dépôt de plainte, la personne est accompagnée au Centre Hospitalier Princesse Grace (C.H.P.G.) pour examen, avant d'être orientée vers les Services enquêteurs ; à défaut de plainte, lesdits Services la contactent pour faire un point de situation et un suivi d'évolution et établissent une main courante ou un rapport ;
- en matière d'accueil des victimes, il est prévu que tout soit fait pour rassurer la personne, lui exposer les suites possibles et lui fournir toutes documentations d'aide et d'informations ainsi qu'un compte-rendu au Parquet Général. Un dispositif comprend une grille d'analyse des suites à donner avec un formulaire d'évaluation des dangers (23 questions orientant la situation et la prise de décision) accompagnant la main courante ou le rapport au Parquet général ;
- relativement au traitement judiciaire des plaintes et des dénonciations, les services de la Sûreté Publique utilisent un modèle de plainte spécifique, joint au formulaire d'évaluation des dangers précité ; l'Officier de Police Judiciaires propose au Parquet la mise en œuvre des mesures récentes énoncées par l'article 37-1 du Code de procédure pénale, à savoir interdiction, pour le mis en cause, de rentrer en contact avec la victime et proposition à celle-ci, d'une solution d'hébergement.

S'agissant des initiatives spécifiques, on mentionnera les diverses mesures prises durant la période de confinement, période décidée par le Gouvernement Princier au printemps 2020 afin de stopper la propagation du virus Covid-19. Ces mesures ont été prises par les services de l'Etat, la société civile et le Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes.

En premier lieu, on précisera qu'à cette date, il n'y a pas eu à Monaco de recrudescence constatée en matière de violences contre les femmes durant la période de confinement. La vigilance du Gouvernement Princier et de la société civile restent toutefois constantes.

De plus, la dimension réduite du territoire permet aux effectifs de police d'intervenir sur un temps très court.

En second lieu, le numéro vert international 0800 91 90 10 reste, 7j/7, à la disposition de toutes personnes victimes de violences qui se trouvent sur le territoire monégasque pour leur permettre de disposer gratuitement de renseignements sur les prises en charge dont elles auraient besoin.

Enfin, on peut relever qu'un soutien, notamment psychologique, est assuré auprès de l'ensemble des résidents de la Principauté, lesquels peuvent contacter par téléphone la cellule de suivi Covid-19 dont le service est accessible 7j/7.

Les nouvelles mesures mises en œuvre :

- lancement d'une campagne d'information dédiée aux violences conjugales en période de confinement, rappelant les contacts utiles, diffusée sur différents supports de communication (abris bus connectés, site « covid19.mc », chaîne de télévision locale...) et sur les réseaux sociaux. Ces messages ont été traduits en anglais ;
- mise en place d'une adresse-mail pour que les victimes de violences domestiques puissent contacter la Direction de la Sûreté publique (police) : sos-violences@gouv.mc (qui s'ajoute à

l'appel téléphonique du « 17 »). Cette adresse-mail a été maintenue après la période de confinement ;

- diffusion, en langue française et anglaise, d'une fiche synthétique informant les victimes des dispositifs mis à leur disposition en cas de danger, avec indication des procédures pour leur venir en aide, sur les sites internet du Gouvernement, du Covid19.mc, du site du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes et sur les réseaux sociaux ;
- distribution d'une « fiche réflexe » dans toutes les Officines de la Principauté, en collaboration avec le Conseil de l'ordre des pharmaciens de Monaco, en vue de signaler ces violences. Les officines de la Principauté ont non seulement affiché les informations utiles en leurs murs mais leurs personnels ont été avisés de l'accompagnement à apporter à une personne qui se déclarerait victime auprès d'eux. Ce dispositif est toujours actif à l'heure actuelle ;
- mise en place de mesures générales exceptionnelles et temporaires par le Gouvernement Princier pour ce qui est de la protection des femmes au regard de la crise économique liée au Covid-19. Celles-ci visent à encourager le télétravail, à interdire les licenciements pendant la période de confinement, à garantir aux salariés et aux travailleurs indépendants un revenu minimum et à accorder aux parents un arrêt maladie indemnisé pour la garde d'enfants.

Au surplus, des alternatives aux maisons d'hébergement existantes ont été également mises en place :

- un partenariat avec un hôtel de Monaco, offrant un hébergement d'urgence à titre gracieux pour les femmes victimes de violences ;
- une mise à disposition, entre mai et fin juin, sur proposition du club professionnel de football de la Principauté, l'A.S.M., de logements non occupés par les jeunes issus de son centre de formation, du fait de l'arrêt des championnats et du départ des jeunes footballeurs.

On soulignera enfin que la Direction de l'Action et de l'Aide Sociales (D.A.S.O.), sous l'autorité du Département des Affaires Sociales et de la Santé de Monaco, continue d'apporter aux victimes dont la situation le justifierait les aides financières, une assistance psychologique et l'hébergement d'urgence qui leur seraient nécessaires.

De même, durant la crise sanitaire, les services de santé en général et de santé reproductive en particulier, n'ont jamais été fermés et l'activité judiciaire a été maintenue en vue de la poursuite des auteurs de violences et de la protection de leurs victimes.

2.3 changements institutionnels

Le Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes a notamment pour mission de prévenir et combattre les violences et discriminations à leur égard. Il permet de coordonner et d'évaluer l'action et les politiques publiques mais aussi le tissu associatif qui agit dans ce domaine.

Dans le cadre de ses travaux, un des groupes de travail est dédié à la formation professionnelle. Son but est de proposer des actions pour renforcer la formation des professionnels accueillant des victimes.

En 2020, le Comité a mis en place un plan de formation comprenant un premier module dédié au primo accueil des femmes victimes de violence. Entre janvier et décembre 2020, 160 personnels des services administratifs et hospitaliers ont été formés. Parmi eux des personnels des services sociaux, de la sûreté publique, des établissements scolaires et le personnel administratif du Centre Hospitalier Princesse Grace ont participé à cette journée de formation.

Par ailleurs, les magistrats et les avocats seront sensibilisés en 2021 puisque l'objectif de ces actions est de former toutes les personnes ayant à traiter des violences, de disposer d'une culture commune en Principauté et de créer un réseau entre professionnels.

Un second module de formation dédié à la prise en charge des victimes de violences sera organisé par la suite pour les professionnels de terrain (policiers, pompiers, travailleurs sociaux notamment).

Une sensibilisation du milieu médical (médecins de ville, pharmaciens) est également à l'étude.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

La production de données statistiques

Une étude sur les violences faites aux femmes a été publiée au mois de janvier 2020. Cette publication présente les principales données disponibles durant l'année 2019 et dresse un état des lieux des violences selon différents indicateurs mesurables. Les informations ont été récoltées et analysées par l'Institut Monégasque de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (l'I.M.S.E.E.) auprès des différentes sources puis présentées au Groupe « Etudes et statistiques ».

La deuxième publication est prévue début janvier 2021 pour analyser les données relatives à l'année 2020.

Outre le nombre de cas, l'I.M.S.E.E. s'attache également, lorsque cela est possible, à étendre cet état des lieux à des données complémentaires telles que : l'analyse des types de violences commises ; le ou les lieu(x) des violences ; l'âge des victimes ; leur lien avec l'auteur. Ceci permettra, à plus long terme d'être en mesure de disposer d'une série complète sur plusieurs années, pour analyser l'éventuelle évolution de ce phénomène et mettre en place des actions ciblées.

Les opérations de communication

La Principauté s'associe déjà depuis plusieurs années aux opérations mises en œuvre dans le cadre de la Journée internationale pour l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes du 25 novembre. La campagne 2020 a mis l'accent sur les violences intrafamiliales et leurs conséquences aussi bien sur les victimes que sur les témoins de ces violences avec un message principal : « La violence n'a pas sa place dans nos vies ».

Cette campagne s'articulait autour de plusieurs temps forts :

- la réalisation d'un film de fiction mettant en lumière la nécessité d'agir face à la violence faite aux femmes, souvent non visible. Le film dévoile, à travers le regard d'un enfant, la vie d'une mère dont on comprend seulement à la fin qu'elle est victime de violences domestiques. Ce film a été diffusé sur la chaîne de télévision *Monaco info*, sur les réseaux sociaux du Comité et du Gouvernement, ainsi que sur de nombreux supports en ville et dans la presse ;

- l'organisation d'une conférence animée par le Secrétaire d'Etat à la Justice de Monaco. Intitulée « *La Justice face aux défis des violences intrafamiliales* », organisée le 26 novembre 2020 en présence notamment des représentants des institutions monégasques, des acteurs du Comité et des représentants du corps judiciaire ;
- des partenariats avec des entités institutionnelles (Mairie) ou associatives qui ont aidé à donner encore plus d'impact à cette journée.

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.1 changements législatifs

On notera ici la loi n° 1.477 du 11 novembre 2019 portant dépénalisation de l'avortement qui a supprimé toute sanction pénale à l'encontre de la femme qui a avorté.

Par ailleurs, on rappellera que le droit interne ne comporte rigoureusement aucune discrimination à l'égard des femmes dans l'accès à la justice. Celles-ci jouissent, comme les hommes, de recours effectifs pour faire valoir leurs droits.

En outre, l'assistance judiciaire est octroyée à toute personne dont les revenus annuels sont inférieurs à 20.000€ (Ordonnance Souveraine n° 3.387 du 3 août 2011 précisant les modalités d'admission au bénéfice de l'assistance judiciaire), à l'effet de leur permettre de faire valoir leurs droits en justice. L'assistance judiciaire s'applique en toute matière.

Néanmoins, en matière pénale, elle ne peut être accordée qu'à la partie civile, la personne prévenue pouvant quant à elle bénéficier d'un avocat commis d'office conformément aux dispositions du Code de procédure pénale (Cf. la loi n° 1.378 du 18 mai 2011 relative à l'assistance judiciaire et à l'indemnisation des avocats).

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.1 changements législatifs

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

4.2 changements dans les politiques

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

4.3 changements institutionnels

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

5. Objectif stratégique : protéger les droits des femmes et des filles migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile

5.1 changements législatifs

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

5.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

5.3 changements institutionnels.

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

6. Objectif : intégrer les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

6.3 changements institutionnels

Pas de changement par rapport aux réponses données en 2019

MONTENEGRO

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, conducted an external evaluation of PAPRR.

The evaluation of PAPRR was made in order to obtain an independent and systematic assessment of the success of the activities envisaged by this document, taking into account the fact of the need to apply a new methodological approach to the development of strategic documents. The evaluation findings provided strategic guidelines for a new strategic document in the field of gender equality, the fourth, and the Working group for new strategic document has been formed already, and it consists from representatives of relevant institutions and NGOs. Its adoption is expected to the end of March 2021.

Link to PAPRR Evaluation:

[https://www.mmp.gov.me/ResourceManager/FileDownload.aspx?rid=415732&rType=2&file=Evaluation of Action Plan for Achieving Gender Equality in Montenegro.pdf](https://www.mmp.gov.me/ResourceManager/FileDownload.aspx?rid=415732&rType=2&file=Evaluation%20of%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Achieving%20Gender%20Equality%20in%20Montenegro.pdf)

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The Gender Equality Index for Montenegro, as an instrument for measuring progress in achieving gender equality, was presented for the first time at the end of January 2020.

For the first time, the calculated value of the Gender Equality Index for Montenegro, which is 55, while the average value of 28 EU countries is 67.4, indicated that Montenegro should make further progress in the field of gender equality. The index showed that the biggest differences are in the domain of power and money, and the least in the area of health and work.

The results of the index indicate that despite a number of legislative and strategic documents adopted to strengthen the position of women and achieve full gender equality, inequality is still expressed through insufficient political and social participation of women, economic inequality, unequal division of responsibilities, differences in access and property rights which puts women at a disadvantage, etc.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and MONSTAT publish the publication “Women and Men in Montenegro” once every two years. The publication was first published in 2006. The publication consists of tables and graphs without additional statistical and sociological analyses and can serve as a source of information for data users interested in the position of women and men, as well as gender equality in Montenegro. The latest publication was published on 3 December 2020 and gives an overview of the situation from 2019.

Link to presentation: https://www.monstat.org/cg/publikacije_page.php?id=212&pageid=142

- The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights has prepared an electronic platform with data on gender-based violence, in co-operation with the UNDP Office and under the auspices of the Austrian Government. Gender Map – an electronic platform with gender-based statistics; on the home page of the Gender Map, we can get acquainted and be informed about the demographic structure of Montenegro. Link to the Gender Map: <https://www.rodnamapa.me/>
- The home page gives key information on the socio-economic situation of men and women, statistical gender data, key indicators of the Gender Equality Index. The homepage is designed to provide pictorial information that is essential for monitoring and advancing gender issues.

The guides direct us to priority areas related to politics, economics and gender-based violence where women are still discriminated against and do not have equal opportunities. By selecting the area, we

come to a new map with statistics, key indicators, and other useful materials necessary for analysis in the given areas.

- It serves as a tool for monitoring gender indicators in Montenegro.
- Offers a number of gender-disaggregated statistics.
- Offers data from research on gender equality.
- Provides easier insight into a number of indicators of the position of women in the spheres of politics, economics and gender-based violence.
- It offers numerous opportunities for independent examination and research of numerous aspects that affect the socio-economic picture of Montenegrin society from the perspective of gender equality.
- It is adapted to mobile, tablet and desktop devices.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, has prepared a video on gender-based violence, which has been presented during this year's campaign – three videos.

“Women and Men in Montenegro” – the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, in co-operation with the MONSTAT, has prepared publication with gender-based data.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, in co-operation with the Human Resource Authorities, has organised two online one-day training sessions on the topics: *Basic of Gender Equality*, and *Resolution SCUN 1325 “Women, Peace and Security”* for state employees.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

COVID-19

All countries in Europe and the world have faced various challenges to protect their citizens from the COVID-19 pandemic. It was found that during crisis situations and pandemics, violence against women and domestic violence increases due to isolation, stress, increased nervousness, etc. All data showed that the number of reported cases of domestic violence increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, both in Montenegro and around the world.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic increases the already high level of gender-based violence, especially due to greater economic stress in households in times of crisis combined with social isolation.

In Montenegro, for the period March-April 2020, the national SOS line registered 20% more reports compared to the same period last year.

Montenegro has recognised the importance of multidisciplinary, multisectoral and co-ordinated action of all institutions dealing with protection from violence against women and domestic violence, while respecting the rule of law, democracy and basic human rights.

The Government of Montenegro, in co-operation with relevant institutions, has taken a number of measures when it comes to combating the consequences of the COVID pandemic.

The National Co-ordination Body for Infectious Diseases offered three packages of economic assistance measures for those areas of business affected by the crisis, then favourable IRF credit lines, subsidies for salaries and tax relieves, as well as some material assistance in the form of food and personal hygiene packages.

The National Co-ordinating Body also provided paid leave to one of the parents of children under 11, as a result of the working ban of kindergartens and primary schools.

Through all media in Montenegro, on 28 March 2020, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights joined the EU Institute for Gender Equality in Vilnius and the Council of Europe Expert Team - GREVIO in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, in the call aimed at general public and all relevant institutions, stating that in the time of a relentless fight against the COVID-19 virus pandemic, it must not be lost from the sight that the current situation may further affect women and children victims of violence, and insisted on taking the necessary measures to prevent the escalation of domestic violence.

As part of the national campaign “Stay Home” launched to prevent the spread of the infection, the Government of Montenegro, in co-operation with non-governmental organisations dealing with gender-based violence, launched in parallel the campaign “Safe at Home” as a first step in combating gender-based violence and in support of victims of violence.

In the meantime, the GREVIO Committee (Council of Europe Group of Experts responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention) requested the signatory countries to compile a report on measures taken in respect of gender-based violence in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights gave their inputs to the Report in order to address gender - based violence in the context of COVID-19.

In order for the State to help victims of domestic violence in the best possible way, with the support of the UNDP in Montenegro and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, a Crisis Action Plan for Specialised Service Providers for Victims of Violence was developed in accordance with the Istanbul Convention.

This Crisis Action Plan is a joint action plan of the State and non-governmental organisations that provide specialised support services for victims of violence against women and domestic violence.

It defines in more detail the functioning of the shelter and confidential persons, as well as providing support to victims of violence during pandemic measures, in the conditions of implementing self-isolation measures and restricted movement, and in accordance with the Recommendations of the National Co-ordinating Body.

In order to better protect both the physical and mental health of victims, non-governmental organisations with experience in providing psycho-social support, legal support, counselling and therapy are involved.

In addition, recommendations for the implementation of the Protocol on the Treatment, Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence are given.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has instructed all centres for social work to be accessible to victims of domestic violence at all times and to promote the operation of the shelter and the national SOS hotline. Also, all centres for social work should continue good co-operation with all institutions, especially with the Police Directorate, and act with due care.

UNDP, in co-operation with the Government, developed a digital solution for emergency responses in cases of violence, i.e. the cell phone application “Be Safe”, which was available for Android and IOS systems. The application allows victims of violence to with one click send a personal request via SMS to national SOS lines, or other confidential organisations/persons.

In addition, the “Be Safe” application, which works on the principle of one click, sends an automatic message to the national SOS telephone line containing the phone number from which the call was made and the exact location of the victim, thus achieving multidisciplinary co-operation between the State and non-governmental organisations.

In co-operation with key institutions, UNDP conducted an awareness-raising campaign to address the increase in gender-based violence in crisis situations, and this was a good occasion for the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights to remind the public of the legal protection and services available to them. Be Safe was also promoted as part of the campaign and as an additional instrument to support victims of gender-based violence.

Also, by acting in this way, the Government of Montenegro and relevant institutions responded to the challenges posed by the Council of Europe (Commission for Gender Equality, European Parliament and UN Women), which sent their recommendations on the actions of member states during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NETHERLANDS

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

From 1 July 2020, the (male or female) partner of the birthmother has the right to take five weeks additional birth leave after the first week of paid leave. The additional birth leave can be taken within six months following the birth. During this additional birth leave, the partner is entitled to a benefit of 70% of normal pay. Employers can top this up.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

See 2.4

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The Netherlands is currently taking steps to expand criminal law protection against involuntary sex. We are also looking at ways to criminalise sexual harassment. In doing so, criminal law will be more in line with the Istanbul Convention.

2.2 Policy changes

Extra measures were taken this year to make sure the restrictive measures taken to control the spread of COVID-19 do not lead to extra victims as a result of an increase of domestic violence.

The government-funded organisation 'Safe at home' (Veilig Thuis) opened a chat function to make it easier for victims and bystanders to ask for advice relating to domestic violence. They also launched a campaign to motivate people to seek help or advise if they suspect domestic violence. Also, the code word 'Mask-19' was introduced, which victims of domestic violence can use at the pharmacy if they are in need of help, but are afraid to ask for it, or are not able to ask for it.

A specific agenda has been established with concrete actions to eradicate harmful practices against migrant women and girls. The agenda addresses several problems: female genital mutilation, honour related violence and forced marriages.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Last year, several campaigns have been launched to address specific forms of gender related violence:

- A campaign by 'Safe at home' (Veilig Thuis) addressing bystanders to take action if they suspect domestic violence. <https://www.ikvermoedhuiselijkgeweld.nl/>
- Another campaign that is still running is addressing victims of sexual violence to seek help. 'Wat kan mij helpen' (What could help me?) <https://www.watkanmijhelpen.nl/>
- The Alliance 'Act4Respect' (by organisations Rutgers and Atria) has launched a campaign in 2019 aimed at youth, in which they address stereotypical ideas that often play a part in the emergence and continuation of gender related violence. <https://www.generatiejaen.nl/> This year (November 2020) they launched a follow-up focusing on the problem of victim blaming in cases of sexual, and other forms of, gender related violence.
- The organisation Femmes for Freedom launched a campaign 'I decide' in which they strive for more sexual freedom for migrant women. <https://www.femmesforfreedom.com/i-decide-sexual-rights-are-human-rights/>
- We funded Emancipator (an organisation of men working for gender equality) to develop a framework for co-operation with more than 30 organisations working with men and boys to stop violence against women. Part of the funding was used for the White Ribbon Campaign: <https://www.emancipator.nl/whiteribbon/>. In August 2020, they received a new funding for their

activities for the next three years. This enabled them to continue the White Ribbon Campaign in 2020, under the title 'Be the (hu)man you wish to see in the world'.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

In 2019, the Netherlands received the GREVIO baseline evaluation report (Istanbul Convention). The GREVIO committee applauded the Netherlands for the continuing efforts to eradicate domestic violence and other forms of violence against women and girls. It also formulated a number of recommendations, mainly in the area of the improvement of the gender sensitivity of policies in this domain. At the moment we are awaiting an advisory report by Regioplan to give some concrete options on how to take steps to improve this.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.2 Policy changes

In July 2019, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Kajsa Ollongren, sent a [letter](#) to parliament about policy commitments concerning women in public administration.

4.3 Institutional changes

In September 2019, the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER) advised the government on which measures to take in order to increase gender and cultural diversity in senior positions. The council's advice is very important and influential in the Netherlands. The parliament asked the government to implement the advice of the SER in its policy. In light of this, the Dutch Government proposed a new law to the parliament. The idea for the new act (to be implemented in the Dutch Civil Code) is to go one step further than the previous law and propose a statutory diversity quota of at least 30% women and 30% men in supervisory boards of listed companies. Listed companies which have not yet achieved this 30% quota may only appoint a person of the under-represented gender in the event of a vacancy. If a new appointment does not attribute to the male/female balance, this appointment will be null and void. The introduction of this nullity sanction means that listed companies will have to take into account the proposed statutory diversity quota for each new appointment of a supervisory board member. In addition, an obligation for 'large' companies is introduced to set 'ambitious' targets to promote gender diversity in the management and supervisory boards and senior management. These self-imposed targets are not without obligation: in the case of vacancies on a management or supervisory board without women, in principle, at least one woman must be appointed. In the event of deviations from the target figures, reasons must be given and accounted for. 'Large' companies should also draw up a plan for achieving this target, which is also reported on.

Following the SER's advice, the government has decided that the aforementioned measures taken in the private sector, will be supplemented by measures in the public and the semi-public sector. Given the considerable diversity of the organisations belonging to the (semi-)public sector, a one-size-fits-all regulation, similar to the one introduced in the private sector, is, however, deemed inopportune. In order to develop an integral approach mindful of the differences between organisations in the (semi-)public sector, a government-wide programme has been set up, existing of an administrative working group and steering group and an independent advisory group. The advisory group, consisting of scholars with expertise in a wide range of relevant fields, will present their research report and recommendations to the administrative steering group in December 2020. Subsequently, the administrative working group and steering group, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in the (semi-)public sector, will make a first assessment on how to incorporate the recommendations into policy. It is expected that the advisory group's report and the cabinet's procedural comments will be sent to parliament in the spring of 2021.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Establishment of the Political Women Network in 2019 whose activities include:

- A Mentor Network: women considering entering political and public decision-making are paired up with experienced female political and public office holders.
- The organisation of two public (network) meetings in December 2019 and November 2020 on women in political and public offices, during which awareness was raised for the problem of female underrepresentation.
- Several training sessions for women considering entering political and public offices, and women who are already holding a political or public office.

In December 2019, a [research report](#) was published on the gender balance in Dutch political and public offices. Currently a follow-up research is being executed, focused on the outflow of female political and public office holders.

In December 2019, an expert meeting was organised on the topic 'female political and public office holders' and in May 2020, an inspiration session was organised on the same topic.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

In the [monitoring](#) of violence in the political arena special attention was paid to gender differences.

In 2021, a report with facts and figures about our public administration will be published (*Staat van Bestuur*). This report will include statistics on the background of political and public office holders (gender, age and education).

Developments to stimulate the selection of more female political and public office holders:

- The selection procedure for the commissioner of the King was adapted to make it more inclusive.

A course on selecting without prejudices was created in September/October 2019 and is currently offered to selection committees of political parties, and selection committees for mayors and commissioners of the King.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.4 Research and awareness raising

See 2.4

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Gender equality is part of the Integral Assessment Framework (IAK in Dutch) that is used by all public employees concerning new laws and policies. The IAK is a Dutch framework that has integrated the Sustainable Development Goals. A new educational video has been made about the gender equality test of the IAK which has been published and spread amongst public employees. The gender equality test of the IAK has also been discussed amongst public employees in specific forums that are concerned with the IAK and SDGs.

NORTH MACEDONIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Sexual harassment is defined by the new draft Law on prevention and protection from violence against women and domestic violence in accordance with the Istanbul Convention as follows:

- “Sexual harassment” is any verbal, non-verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature that has the purpose or consequence of violating the dignity of the person, especially when creating a threatening, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment;
- “Sexual harassment online” is an unwanted verbal, non-verbal or other act of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or consequence, violation of dignity or creation of a threatening, hostile, humiliating or intimidating environment, approach or practice, through electronic means of communication.

The government adopted the law in October 2020 and it is in parliamentary procedure.

1.2 Policy changes

According to Article 9 of the Labour Law, harassment and sexual harassment are prohibited. Article 5 of the Law on Protection from Harassment at Work also regulates the prohibition of sexual harassment.

This applies to both the public and private sectors.

1.3 Institutional changes

A working group was formed to work on the new amendments to the new draft law on prevention and protection from violence against women and domestic violence that addresses these issues. Regarding the equality bodies, the same bodies remain as the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, the Ombudsman, the Judicial Protection.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Gender Equality in 2019, following the situation with sexism directed at women in politics, reacted and submitted to the public a Report aimed at raising public awareness and stopping sexist attacks in the media, especially on social media against women.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Family Violence, which intends to align the national legal framework with the Istanbul Convention, is adopted by the government in October 2020, it is in parliamentary procedure.

The purpose of the law is to implement the principle of equality, eliminate stereotypes about gender roles, prevents all forms of violence against women and domestic violence and ensures respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and ratified international agreements.

The law regulates the competences of institutions with regards to the protection of women from all forms of violence against women and other victims of domestic violence, the mutual co-ordination of institutions and organisations, services for protection of victims, measures for the prevention of violence and data collection.

Amendments of Criminal Code and Criminal Procedural Code are in the process of preparation. Standards of Istanbul Convention are incorporated in the amendments. The Law on free legal aid has

been adopted in order to provide equal access to justice for every citizen. The Law for compensation of victims of violent crime is prepared. Victims of gender-based violence are protected under this law.

2.2 Policy changes

In times of pandemic and lockdowns, a number of countries reported an increased number of cases of gender-based violence and introduced a number of innovative technological tools for greater access to information and faster response to support victims. For this purpose, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in co-operation with UNDP has been developing mobile application BE SAFE for reporting gender-based violence in the country. This application will collect and compile all information about the services available for support of victims of gender-based violence. The application is expected to be operational by the end of 2020 and is intended to be further maintained once the situation with the pandemic ends.

Since 2019, there are 11 new specialised services for victims of domestic violence in seven statistical regions, operating as organisational units of the social work centres. The specialised services for women victims of domestic violence provide the following services: counselling, psycho-social assistance and support, intervention and treatment, accommodation of the victim in the Centre for women victims of domestic violence in case of real threat upon the life and health of the victim and in the absence of other care resources; the accommodation in the later may last up to three months with the possibility of extension for another three months, and up to a maximum of one year.

NAP has been adopted to implement Istanbul Convention operational plans at ministerial level.

2.3 Institutional changes

The new Law on violence against women and domestic violence, which is in the parliamentary procedure, envisages the establishment of a National Co-ordination Body. After the adoption of this law, this body will be formed.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The new Law on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence envisages a separate chapter for the establishment of a system of data collection and research at the national level. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has prepared a campaign for reporting domestic violence in the COVID-19 state of emergency and it has been distributed through social media and the public service. As part of the campaign, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy also prepared flyers containing the basic information for reporting domestic violence, i.e. where the victim should turn for help, the existing services and they are distributed in places that are most visited in this period, as in urban and rural areas on the territory of the Republic of Northern Macedonia.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

According to the new Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, the burden of proof is on the discriminator and a lawsuit has been filed *actio popularis*.

3.2 Policy changes

The new draft Law on prevention and protection from violence against women and domestic violence envisages the introduction of an obligation to collect data disaggregated on several grounds. This obligation is specifically given to both the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Courts.

Also, with the new law on prevention and protection against discrimination, the institutions have an obligation to collect data on all grounds.

3.3 Institutional changes

It is included as an obligation of the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination with the new Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**4.1 Legislative**

In 2015, the Electoral Code was amended where Article 64 paragraph 5 states that: In the submitted list of candidates for MPs from the position and for members of the council of the municipality and the city of Skopje, at least 40% of the candidates belong to the underrepresented gender, namely: for every three places at least one place belongs to the underrepresented sex and additionally at least one more place for every ten places. As a result of the Law In the current composition of the Assembly of RSM, 47 out of 120 MPs (39.1%) are women, while their representation in the local councils after the elections in 2017 is 415 women councillors out of a total of 1,388 elected councillors in the local self-government units (29.8%).

4.2 Policy changes

Analyses are in progress to find an appropriate legal solution to this issue through a project of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy funded by the EU.

4.3 Institutional changes

This issue will be regulated by the amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which is being changed.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2019 has implemented a mentoring programme for women in the Public Administration with the support of the OSCE Mission in Skopje.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

This issue will be regulated by the amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which is being changed, and the Criminal Code.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls**5.1 Legislative changes**

The principle of non-refoulement is fully harmonised in the new draft law on prevention and protection from violence against women and domestic violence.

5.2 Policy changes

The new Law on International and Temporary Protection (adopted in April 2018) singled out especially vulnerable groups in need of protection, such as pregnant women and victims of violence, in the same time providing legal obligations for the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to develop appropriate by-laws ensuring systematic and formal provision of social protection to these beneficiaries.

In the case of emergencies, as well as within the refugee reception facilities, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in co-operation with UN agencies and NGOs ensures 24/7 field level access to social workers and services aligned for social protection system.

5.3 Institutional changes

During the 2015 European Refugee Crises, more than 1 million migrants and refugees had transited the country on their way to seek asylum in western European countries. In order to provide for temporary shelter and humanitarian aid, the Republic of North Macedonia had opened two reception-transit centres where migrants and refugees received basic humanitarian aid. The governmental agencies, together with UN agencies and NGO representatives ensured implementation of several gender sensitive measures, as follows:

- Development, adoption and implementation of the Interagency SOP for prevention and response on gender-based violence in the time of humanitarian crises/emergencies
- Ensuring architectural design of the reception camps to include separate access to sanitary facilities for women and girls, locating temporary shelters at the secure locations with sufficient lighting of the paths
- Employment of female social workers and psychologists to ensure gender sensitive protection and psychosocial support
- Opening of SOS lines, info points and special women and children points to ensure access to information, mechanisms to report violence, and formation of women educational groups and groups for psychosocial support.
- Ensured access to health protection and specific reproductive-health care within the reception centres.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

A two-year project implemented in co-operation with UN Women (from January 2020 to December 2021) will promote gender equality and improve the lives of women in North Macedonia by systematically applying gender responsive budgeting in strategic planning, policy making and government budgeting processes.

This issue will be regulated by the amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which is being changed.

6.2 Policy changes

In accordance with the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018-2020 New Law on Primary Education 2019/2020 was adopted.

The law introduced special anti-discrimination clauses on all grounds of discrimination (including gender, gender identity, sexual orientation). More specifically, a new article (Article 5) for protection against discrimination and promotion of equality was introduced in the new Law on Primary Education. Further on, Article 6 stipulates affirmative measures to fight discrimination and exclusion.

In accordance with the Rulebook on the manner of performing analysis of the contents of curricula, programmes and textbooks from the aspect of promoting equal opportunities for women and men, specially established working group analysed a set of curricula and textbooks against their compliance with Article 6 of the Law on Equal Opportunities, specifically the part related to education.

The Bureau for Development of Education submitted analysis of 15 textbooks (7 textbooks are used in primary education and 8 in secondary education) to the Ministry of Education and Science with regards to the alignment of their content with the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination.

6.3 Institutional changes

In order to fulfil the obligation stemming from Article 7 of Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, the Ministry of Interior implemented the gender concept in the procedures for selection of personnel when admitting candidates for basic training for police officers in the Ministry of Interior, which are gender sensitive especially with regards to criteria for motor skills.

Consequently, there is an increase in the percentage of women referred to basic training for police officers in 2019 compared to 2018. Under the 2019 public announcement for admission of 600 law enforcement officers to the position of “police officer”, i.e. after the selection 83.53% of men and 16.47% of women were referred to basic training for police officer, compared to 13.67% in 2018.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The OSCE Mission to Skopje and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy have been implementing a mentoring programme for women in full-time employment in state institutions to encourage professional development and leadership of women in the public sector.

Main challenges and lessons learned

The main challenge is to develop a system that will respond quickly and effectively to the protection of women in times of crisis. That is what we learned during the pandemic.

NORWAY

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act contains a separate provision setting out rules on an activity duty relating to harassment and sexual harassment. Both employers, organisations and educational institutions are required to make efforts to prevent harassment and sexual harassment in their areas of responsibility.

A new statutory provision in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act which strengthens activity and reporting duties for undertakings and authorities took effect from 1 January 2020.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act also imposes a duty on the social partners to promote equality actively in their areas of activity.

Public authorities have a duty to engage actively in efforts to promote equality in all sectors of society.

The amendment contains a clarification of the duty of employers and the authorities to prevent and deter sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

In the same amendment to the law, the Discrimination Tribunal was given authority to enforce the prohibition against sexual harassment in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. The purpose was to provide a low-threshold service for cases of sexual harassment.

1.2 Policy changes

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (hereafter Bufdir) have developed a guide for how employers and authorities can fulfil their activities and reporting duties, including the duty of employers and the authorities to prevent and deter sexual harassment and gender-based violence and the duties of employers to report on gender pay gap on different levels in their undertakings.

The guide is available at www.bufdir.no/arp, and will be updated with more toolkits, checklists and guidelines December 2020/January 2021.

In 2018, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority launched the campaign “Let's draw the line on sexual harassment - A guide to preventing and dealing with sexual harassment”. LDO and the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority have offered courses related to the topic throughout 2020.

1.3 Institutional changes

The Discrimination Tribunal has been given authority to enforce the prohibition against sexual harassment in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. The purpose is to provide a low-threshold service for cases of sexual harassment.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

See also 1.2.

“The Young today-commission”

In November 2019, an officially appointed commission, the Young today-commission submitted their rapport *Gutterom, jenterom og mulighetsrom. Likestillingsutfordringer blant barn og unge* (Boys' rooms, girls' rooms and rooms of opportunity. Gender equality challenges for children and youth.) Their mandate was to assess gender equality challenges for girls and boys in the different arenas where girls and boys live their lives (family, kinder garden, school, spare time activities and media, including social media), and what kind of gender stereotypes young people meet on these arenas.

They were also asked to especially look at gender divided educational choices. The commission found that girls and boys do meet stereotypes in all the above arenas, and outlines how girls and boys in many situations are met with different expectations because of their gender, from birth, throughout school and in educational choices. They conclude that while girls seem to experience high demands, boys experience narrow male norms limiting their options for how they can act, be and choose as a boy. The commission suggests a long range of measures that can be implemented to better coordinate the work on gender equality in these areas, measures to target challenges more directly, and to challenge gender stereotypes and open up the room of opportunity for both boys and girls.

Gender traditional educational choices

The government will present a strategy for how to achieve a less gender-divided education and labour market next year. The “Young Today” committee's report and its proposed measures will be an important part of the strategy. The strategy aims to get more men into female-dominated occupations (for example, as primary school teachers) and more women into male-dominated occupations (for example, in technology professions).

Bufoir has initiated a report with recommendations on measures to recruit more boys and men to health and care educations. The report indicates that boys and men to a large extent associate health and care professions with relatively low status, problems related to working environment and conditions. Almost half of the boys surveyed in upper secondary school and in upper secondary school perceive that the nursing profession is best suited for women. Many boys also seem to have little knowledge about the sector and the opportunities that work in the health and care sector provides. This report is part of the basis for an analysis to develop new measures to recruit more boys and men to the health and care sector.

Women with minority background

Bufoir has initiated a report on knowledge about participation in working life for women with an immigrant background. The report examine how employment among immigrant women has developed over time and between groups, which barriers prevent labour market participation for this group, and how measures can contribute to increasing occupational participation.

Women as entrepreneurs

Women are underrepresented as business owners and among entrepreneurs. Only three of ten entrepreneurs in Norway were women. Therefore, the government submitted a new action plan for female entrepreneurship in 2019.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Bufoir has gathered an overview on measures to counteract gender traditional educational choices. An important element in many of these measures is combating gender stereotypes related to professions and educational choices. An aim is to make sure more schools in secondary level aware of best practice measures and inspiring more schools to focus on these issues.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Norway ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in July 2017. The convention came into force on 1 November 2017.

Norway submitted its first report to GREVIO in September 2020.

The Penal Code section 196 was amended in November 2020 and the duty to prevent criminal acts was expanded to include forced marriage, aggravated human trafficking and aggravated sexual activity etc with children between 14 and 16 years of age.

2.2 Policy changes

The shelter-services for victims of violence in close relationships were defined by the authorities as critical function in the society, together with the children welfare-services. This meaning that the communities are committed to ensure that the services stay open and safe during the pandemic.

In 2018, the government set up a commission to review a range of a spousal homicide cases. The object is to strengthen the knowledge base regarding risk factors and possible warning signs. The commission will propose measures to develop better and more focused protective measures and better prevention strategies. The committee also considers issues related to the possible establishment of a permanent commission (a national femicide watch). The commission will deliver their report in December 2020.

The government is now working on the sixth national action plan against domestic violence, which will apply for the period 2021 to 2025. This action plan follows up on and further develops the Action Plan against Domestic Violence, *A Life without Violence* (2014–2017), and outlines and addresses the remaining challenges. For the first time the present plan of actions includes a separate section on violence and abuse in Sami areas. The new action plan will meet the obligations of the Istanbul Convention, including placing the victim's human rights in the centre of these politics. The aim is to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive and co-ordinated policy against domestic violence that prevents violence, protect and helps the victims, and makes accountable, treats and prosecutes the perpetrators.

2.3 Institutional changes

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security co-ordinates the government's work against domestic violence and chairs an inter-ministerial working group consisting of eight ministries and several directorates. Work against violence and abuse against children and young people, which is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Children and Families, is also anchored in this working group. Similar groups have been established to co-ordinate work against negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, which is chaired by the Ministry of Education and Research, work against rape, which is chaired by the National Police Directorate, and the work against human trafficking, which is chaired by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

The working groups are responsible for the implementation of the measures in the current plans and regularly report on the status of this work. In addition, new strategies and measures are also proposed.

For Norway's part, the Inter-ministerial Working Group against Domestic Violence is responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of the Istanbul Convention, including reporting to the monitoring body GREVIO. The working group consists of 1-3 civil servants (advisors, senior advisors and/or policy directors) from each of the eight ministries. In addition, representatives from several directorates participate in the working group. There is no separate budget line for this group/work.

As for the role of a national monitoring body for the convention, the government is considering who might be relevant to assume such a role.

However, several bodies supervise the authorities' work against violence against women/domestic violence. The Office of the Auditor General is the Storting's supervisory body and conducts inspections and investigations (audits) of the ministries, other state enterprises and the State's ownership interests in companies. The Office of the Auditor General has decided to conduct a study of the government's efforts to combat domestic violence. The audit has begun, but has been delayed due to COVID-19.

The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution is tasked with promoting and protecting human rights in Norway in accordance with the Constitution of Norway, Human Rights Act, international treaties and international law in general. The institution works with a broad range of human rights,

from freedom of expression and privacy protection to rights for vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers, indigenous peoples, children and the elderly. The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution advises the Storting, the government and other authoritative bodies on issues affecting human rights.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Research

A knowledge overview about the shelters for victims of violence in close relations in the communities, published in November 2019 (https://www.kun.no/uploads/7/2/2/3/72237499/nf-rapport_13_2019.pdf) shows that the shelters in general offer good services to victims, but that many small shelters struggle with little resources, especially in the northern part of Norway. According to the Shelters Act from 2010, all the communities are obliged to ensure shelter-services to victims of domestic violence, and the study shows that the awareness of these responsibility varies among the communities.

A national prevalence study of child abuse and neglect in Norway was published in 2019 (https://www.nkvt.no/content/uploads/2019/10/Rapport_4_19_UEVO.pdf). Overall, the study results show that one episode of violence or abuse rarely happens in isolation. The majority of those having experienced one type of child abuse or neglect, had experienced other types of abuse as well. Girls more frequently reported being exposed to more than one violent act compared to boys.

Results showed that about 1 in 20 adolescents had experienced physical violence such as being beaten up, beaten with an object, or beaten with a fist. 1 in 5 had experienced physical violence such as pulling hair, pinching, or slapped. About 1 in 5 have experienced psychological violence from their parents, including being repeatedly been humiliated, ridiculed, belittled or threatened. More girls than boys had experienced psychological violence.

Just over 6% had experiences of sexual abuse by an adult. Results describing sexual abuse among peers reveal a clear picture. More than 1 in 5 have experienced sexual transgressions and abuse from peers, and far more girls than boys are exposed to sexual peer victimisation. Exposure to sexual abuse by peers escalates significantly during adolescence, and girls are more at risk compared to boys from an early age. The offender is most often known to the victim, and in 2 of 3 reported incidents a boy is the offender.

The results relive that girls with one at least parent born outside Europe are at risk of not being allowed to choose friends/relations and leisure activities. Some of these girls are exposed to coercive control and violence at home.

Awareness raising

In the early stages of the pandemic (May-June) Bufdir took action to get the communities to inform on their websites about the shelters for protection against violence in close relations being open and safe under the COVID-19 pandemic. The information about shelters was translated into different languages to reach potential users from minority groups, who are over-represented at the shelters.

A study (<http://kjonnsforskning.no/nb/2020/08/korona-kan-ha-fort-til-mer-vold-mot-kvinner>) indicate a need for a wider awareness-raising campaign on domestic violence under the pandemic and information about shelter-services, etc. and address the national government to undertake such initiative. The report is followed up by the authorities, and a plan for a national awareness-raising campaign on these issues is currently in process (led by Bufdir).

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Anyone who contacts the police in domestic violence and abuse cases will receive the necessary information and offer of legal representation for victims. The police have established co-operation with the municipalities and NAV to ensure that victims receive information about their rights and who they should contact.

All police districts have their own Support Centres for Crime Victims, which help victims of violence, sexual assault or offences with information and guidance, support from when a case is reported until it is settled, witness support and help to apply for compensation for victims of violent crime. The centres are located in 15 cities in Norway and have brochures in English, Arabic, Urdu, Polish, Russian and Somali, among other languages.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes

The activity and reporting duties (see 1.1) shall also help to draw attention to the gender balance at different job and salary levels in the undertakings. The employers that are required to conduct pay surveys by gender, have to do so on different job levels of the undertaking. In order to define these levels or categories, employers and employees must consider not only who perform equal work, but also work of equal value. Employers also need to report on the gender balance on these levels/categories in their statement on the actual status of equality within their undertaking.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

From 2021, the Norwegian name “fylkesmann” (meaning “male County Governor”) will change its name to the gender neutral “statsforvalter” Country Governor in English.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

See 1.1

6.2 Policy changes

See 1.2

6.3 Institutional changes

Nothing to report

6.4 Research and awareness raising

See 1.2 about the development of guide for how public authorities can fulfil their activities and reporting duty. Bufdir is developing guides on how to promote equality and counteract discrimination on several different areas.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

See 1.2.

Consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality has re-actualised the importance of always having gender equality high on the agenda in work life and in the different government sectors. When a crisis like this hit, we need to have the tools and consciousness to make sure that the crisis and efforts made to handle it does not put equality under pressure. Norway has not been hit as hard as many other countries, still we see consequences of the pandemic and the related measures

for different groups in several areas. Bufdir is following and mapping the consequences of the pandemic on equality regarding gender, LGBTIQ, ethnicity, religion, etc, and disabilities, and have dialogue with other sector authorities in this work. Experiences from this crisis could contribute to more active efforts on mainstreaming work on gender equality and equality in general.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

In Norway, there is a clear consensus across political divides that gender equality is an important and a key value in the Norwegian society. A continuous challenge still, is encouraging all relevant partners to put gender equality high on their agenda in their day-to-day work. An important step closing in on this challenge is providing the different sector authorities and public and private employers with relevant tools and clearer requirements to make it easier to prioritise and implement their duties, as with the changes in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (see 1.1).

8. Additional comments, if any

Norway will be happy to share experiences on all the mentioned areas.

ROMANIA

1. Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

- Law No. 167 of 7 August 2020 for amending and supplementing Government Ordinance No. 137/2000 on the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination, as well as for the completion of Article 6 of Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men regulates the psychological harassment in the workplace.

- Decision No. 561/2020 for the approval of the National Strategy and the National Action Plan on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security for the period 2020-2023).

1.2 Policy changes

National Strategy on Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the Period 2018-2021 (GD No. 365/2018).

The action plan of the National Strategy on Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the period 2018-2021 includes specific measures on the reconciliation of work, family and private life for the year 2020, such as:

- a) organising campaigns, actions and measures to increase the involvement of men/fathers in family life
- b) strengthening and improving the legal framework for the creation of mechanisms to support parents and to ensure a balance between family and professional life,
- c) campaigning on the importance of raising awareness of young people's reintegration into the labour market and training for young parents.
- d) encouraging the conclusion of flexible working hours and work for parents.
- e) awareness campaigning on the application of alternative working tools, namely flexible working time and work for parents (distance work).

- Raising awareness of young people and students on the legal provisions regarding the gender equality.
- One of the measures is introducing into the school curriculum notions like gender equality and gender-based violence.

In this regard, ANES annually elaborates an analysis regarding the implementation of the aforementioned national strategy based on a consistent report made by all the institutions with attribution in the field.

1.3 Institutional changes

ANES established a working group on introducing the gender equality perspective into the school curriculum. The working group was composed of representatives from both governmental and non-profit based organisations (National Education Ministry, Educational Studies Institute, National Centre for Examination and Evaluation, Romanian Agency for Quality Assessment in the Higher Education System (ARACIS) Centre for Curricular development and gender studies – FILIA, Society for Contraceptive and Sexual Education (SECS), Youth for Youth Foundation, UNICEF, Transcena Association, Feminist Analysis Association ANA, Centre for Health Policy and Services Foundation).

At the same time, during 2020 ANES worked as a partner for the elaboration of the National Strategy on Gender Equality post 2020 and its Action Plan, which are intended to ensure that the favourable conditions for the 2021-2027 programming period are fulfilled. At the same time, project aims at developing the administrative capacity of ANES in order to base on evidence the public policies in the

area of its responsibility, the national strategic framework for gender equality post 2020, according to the requirements established by the European Commission, in order to meet the essential conditions for the preparation accessing FESI in the period 2021-2027. Thus, according to the directions of action that will be regulated in the future National Strategy in the field of gender equality (favourable condition for the future programming) will be able to access European funds that will allow increased investment in the fields for the benefit of gender mainstreaming in all areas and improving living conditions for women. At the same time, ANES participates in the consultations that the Ministry of European Funds carries out for the elaboration of future operational programs and supports its efforts in the negotiation process with the European Commission, which is in progress.

- Draft decision on the approval of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2027 within the Project "Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Post-2020 - National strategic policy framework for social inclusion and equal opportunities post 2020", SIPOCA Code 653.

- Working group in order to propose an Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection regarding the establishment and functioning of the National Council for the Integration of the Gender Perspective in the Academic Environment.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

1. *Achieve the goal of "zero tolerance" towards domestic violence and to support the domestic violence victims* by conducting information, education and awareness campaigns for 30,000 people: 10,000 people (students, students, teachers), 20,000 (vulnerable Roma women, representatives of Roma communities, representatives of local authorities and professionals with responsibilities related to Roma issues) from the eight development regions, through the predefined Project "Support for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Romania", within the RO20 Financing Programme - Domestic violence and violence based on gender discrimination, funded by the Kingdom of Norway through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2014-2021 and implemented by the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men. Duration: 36 months. Total value: 2.5 million Euro.

2. At the same time, at national level, in the field of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, in accordance with the stage of implementation of the OECD recommendation on gender equality in public life (to which Romania has expressed its intention to adhere), ANES advanced important issues of national interest on: streamlining the implementation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming initiatives and ensuring a balanced participation of women and men in decision-making and leadership.

These will be achieved through awareness campaigns for women and men on the need to involve women in public, political, economic life, but also through affirmative action to achieve in fact accelerated equality of opportunity and treatment between women and men in decision making and closing the historical gap of the representation of women. Thus, we will implement a bilateral project funded by EEA grants, in order to carry out a study visit for an exchange of good practices in the field of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men from the perspective of Iceland, as an OECD member state, with experience in the field covered by the Council Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (No C (2015) 164), SGG will be the Project Leader and the OECD, Iceland and ANES as partners.

3. We are also currently collaborating with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - Mission in Romania, to develop the project sheet entitled "Migrant Women: The Path to Integration" that the IOM is developing and intends to send to obtain funding from part of DG Home through the Migration, Asylum and Integration Fund (FAMI). The project would involve ILO Missions from the Netherlands (Lead Partner), Austria, Spain and Romania. The main objective of the project is to support the inclusion of migrant women from the countries participating in the project by organising various activities with their involvement, but also of some local and/or central institutions/authorities.

4. At the same time, within the HeForShe Campaign conducted by UN Women, Romania, has assumed three specific commitments until 2020:

- Commitment 1. Training of specialists: experts and technicians in the field of equal opportunities in the central and local public administration;
- Commitment 2. Launch of a unique integrated information system for reporting, managing and prosecuting cases of domestic violence and violence against women;
- Commitment 3. Develop and implement programmes on the involvement of girls and boys in social, political and economic life: mobilising over 100,000 young people.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Measures taken to combat the effects of the SARS-COV-2 Coronavirus Epidemic

1. Ongoing public communication regarding the measures, rights and ways to address situations of gender discrimination, including gender-based violence, using communication channels accessible to the general public (Facebook and ANES website) and informing the public about the public services provided both by calling the telephone line with a unique number - 0800 500 333 - for victims of domestic and gender violence, as well as facilitating access to social services for them. Permanent transmission of press information/interviews through the media channels Agerpres, TVR, TVRI, B1TV, Canal 33 and radio stations (Radio Romania News, Europa FM, etc.).

2. Awareness campaign entitled "We see you, we respect you, we act together!" having as its objective the valorisation with priority of the work of the personnel from the fields of maximum importance in the context created by the COVID-19 pandemic, health, public order, defence, education.

<https://anes.gov.ro/campania-nationala-va-vedemva-respectamimpreuna-actionam/>

3. Maintaining a constant dialogue and sending recommendations to public and private entities active in the field of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men. These recommendations will be a point in the perspective of implementing specific policies and programmes for reporting and sanctioning cases of gender discrimination in the workplace and sexual harassment. Those areas in which women are predominantly employed will be considered, given that they are now much more affected by the social distancing measures that have led to job losses.

4. Own procedures shall be developed to adapt to the emergency generated by COVID-19, taking into account equal and non-discriminatory treatment for women and men, as well as respect for the rights of all persons in quarantine, regardless of religion, nationality, age, beliefs, social category, disability, belonging to a disadvantaged category.

5. Carrying out an analysis of gender discrimination, with reference to the situation of applications for technical unemployment, restriction of the activity of economic agents or the impossibility of continuing lucrative activities by small private entrepreneurs, in the context of the pandemic and the emergence of national emergency.

6. Submitting the recommendations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection regarding the prevention and management of the situation generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in public services to COJES.

7. Application of the extension and diversification of the type of information provided at the level of the national telephone line 0800 500 333 for victims of domestic violence and gender violence, telephone line available free of charge, with non-stop assistance, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (for example, guidance on: tele- work, work from home, the possibility to stay at home with children under 12, technical unemployment, information for Romanian women abroad, in other states

affected by COVID-19, information on national security measures adopted by military ordinances, etc.).

8. Communicating with other European countries and European and international bodies and achieving a permanent exchange of information and good practices on measures imposed in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. Ongoing dialogue and consultation with representative NGOs in the field on potential immediate actions and projects in the field of gender equality, in the context of the measures imposed by the pandemic.

10. Collaboration with CARREFOUR ROMANIA, in order to carry out a public campaign, in order to bring to the attention of the public the work of those women who must ensure the passage in good conditions through the pandemic period, permanently exposing themselves to the risks of illness.

11. Raise public awareness of the exponential increase in pressure on care tasks, and the need to introduce specific measures to alleviate the situation by constantly calling for the support of women, the main support in households.

12. Calling for the improvement of home education programmes, which require minimum guidance for parents, the introduction of new distance learning tools to complete the formal curriculum and the design of alternative online pedagogical activities and programmes could help to balance additional care tasks as an effective way to close gender gaps in the home.

13. Carry out a national campaign on the need to increase the representation of women in decision-making, as, in this context of the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses and medical staff work non-stop in the fight against the virus, but at decision-making level, men appear in the foreground. Once again, it is clear how women are not valued when decisions are made that directly influence their lives.

14. Carrying out the campaign “Women in the front line!” on the Facebook page of ANES for highlighting the activity submitted by women in the front line during the COVID-19 pandemic, in areas such as health, public order, defence, education, etc. These fields, mostly feminised, are now proving to be of major interest for the functioning of society as a whole, as evidenced by INS statistics. Only in the medical field in Romania: 70% of doctors are women; 91% of nurses are women; 78% of family doctors are women; 90% of pharmacists and pharmacists are women.

15. The project “Women during and after coronavirus: Information, Research and Advocacy for Gender Equality”, funded by the Active Citizens Fund Romania Programme, Call 4 Human Rights Awareness and Equal Treatment.

16. Between 15 and 21 June 2020, ANES marked “World Day for Awareness of Elder Abuse” through the online photography exhibition “Count on Me!”, Made by the artist Cezar Dobre and progressively presented from 15 to 21 June 2020, on the website [anes.gov.ro. https://anes.gov.ro/expozitia-de-fotografie-conteaza-pe.../](https://anes.gov.ro/expozitia-de-fotografie-conteaza-pe.../)

17. Promoting on the ANES website and social networks of the institution the Council of Europe Recommendations on combating sexism and the tools of these recommendations, in Romanian. <https://www.Council of Europe.int/ro/web/human-rights-channel/stop-sexism>

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

- During the reference period, GD No. 426 of 27 May 2020 on the approval of cost standards for social services was adopted (ANES had the quality of co-initiator of this normative act).

- Law No. 106 of 3 July 2020 regarding the amendment and completion of Law No. 217/2003 for preventing and combating domestic violence which introduces the cyber-violence against women.

2.2 Policy changes

National Strategy on Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the period 2018-2021(GD No. 365/2018).

The general and specific objectives of the integrated strategy for 2020 are:

- Developing the capacity of local public administration authorities to intervene in the preventing and combating of domestic violence cases;
- The implementation at national level of the Integrated Information System for registration, reporting and management of domestic violence cases;
- Increasing efficiency in combating domestic violence crimes;
- Stimulating the institutions with attributions in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence in order to develop, in partnership actions of prevention of the domestic violence phenomenon;
- Continuous professional training of specialists working in the field of domestic violence (social worker, police officer, doctor/forensic doctor, psychologist, prosecutor, judge);
- Rehabilitation of the victim and/or the domestic aggressor who has been subjected to criminal proceedings in criminal matters and against whom non-custodial measures or punishments have been pronounced through integrated and complementary activities, information, counselling, psychotherapy and other therapies in order to increase the autonomy and awareness of the social value of the individual, the development of responsibility and the regaining of social skills;
- Continuing the funding process for the establishment of new units for preventing and combating domestic violence.

Drafts of relevant normative acts, elaborated by ANES in various stages (internal approval circuit/interinstitutional approval) in both fields:

- Decision on the approval of the National Strategy for preventing and combating sexual violence "SYNERGY" 2020-2030 (in inter-institutional approval circuit).
- Decision on the approval of the Integrated National Programme for the Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence and of the framework methodology on the organisation and functioning of the integrated national network of sheltered housing for victims of domestic violence (in internal approval circuit).
- Decision regarding the recognition of the Association of Women Journalists from Romania Ariadna as being of public utility (in internal approval).
- Decision on the approval of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2027 (in the stage of debate with the relevant actors) the implementation of specific measures regulated by attracting European funds.

2.3 Institutional changes

- Working group for the elaboration of the National Strategy against Sexual Violence.
- National co-ordination, Support and Monitoring Committee, within the POCU Project 465/4/4/128038 "Venus – Together for a Safe Life!", Funded by the Human Capital Operational Programme (POCU), Priority Axis 4, Specific Objective 4.4.
- Technical Working Group on Equality, Rights and Values.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

I. Between 25 November 2019 and 10 December 2019, and 25 November 2020 and 10 December 2020, ANES organised a series of events in the margins of the 16 days of activism against violence against women.

II. Action Plan on preventing and combating domestic violence, in the light of the measures imposed at national level in order to combat the spread of COVID-19.

1. Carrying out an analysis on the situation of domestic violence cases registered in the first quarter of 2020/accommodation capacity in social services.

At national level, there are currently a total of 236 services for victims of domestic violence: 152 SOCIAL SERVICES for preventing and combating domestic violence, of which: 146 for victims of domestic violence and 6 for domestic perpetrators and 84 specialised services: 42 support groups and 42 vocational counselling firms.

We mention the fact that from the collaboration and continuous dialogue between ANES and the local public administration authorities with attributions in the field during this period, it resulted that the social services in residential regime carry out their activity in compliance with the measures and recommendations imposed at national level. the spread of COVID-19, and the day-to-day ones have modified and adapted their activity so that they can continue to provide counselling and information to victims of domestic violence (keeping social distance, alternative means of communication by phone, WhatsApp, Skype, etc.).

Also, in the next period, through the project "Support for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Romania" financed through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, within the "Justice" programme and implemented by ANES (Total value of 2,500,000€) the following activities will be carried out, among others:

- Establishment of eight regional counselling centres and development of a unitary methodology and a set of standardised tools for working with aggressors.
- Support and counselling for victims of sexual violence by setting up ten rape crisis centres.

2. Permanent communication on the Facebook address and on the ANES website for the information of the public opinion about: the measures, the rights, the support services existing and available during this period.

3. Communication of recommendations addressed to potential victims in domestic violence regarding the further application of the protection measures provided by law: OPP, OP and access to social services, security measures necessary to prevent and limit the pandemic.

4. Ongoing dialogue and recommendations to all social service providers to remain available to potential beneficiaries - victims of domestic violence and to ensure admission to specialised residential services in compliance with the new security protection measures (some of them have developed their own procedure adapted to the situation emergency generated by COVID-19, taking into account: increased hygiene, social distancing, possibly isolation of new beneficiaries/quarantine).

5. Transmission of recommendations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection on the prevention and management of the situation generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in social services, recommendations of managing authorities to social service providers to prevent and combat domestic violence and similar provisions in the Military Ordinances.

6. Sending the recommendation regarding the adaptation of the activity of non-residential social services, as the case may be, through alternative means of communication such as: telephone, WhatsApp, Skype, online information platform - on the institution's website, information through Facebook page.

7. Application of extension and diversification of the type of information provided through the national hotline 0800 500 333 for victims of domestic violence, available free of charge, helpline with non-stop assistance, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (for example , guidance on: telework, work from

home, the possibility to stay at home with children under 12, technical unemployment, information for Romanian women abroad in other states affected by COVID-19, information on national security measures adopted by Military Ordinances, etc.)

8. Organising specific training sessions in order to strengthen the intervention capacity of HELPLINE operators with no. unique 0800 500 333 to increase the level of quality of services for victims of domestic violence, human trafficking and sex discrimination (with the support of the eLiberare Association).

Three training sessions were organised by specialised trainers from the eLiberare Association.

9. Permanent dialogue with colleagues from the Romanian Police/IGPR to ensure the issuance of provisional protection orders in good condition and to monitor these orders and protection orders.

10. Carrying out an analysis of the situation in other states regarding the incidence of domestic violence.

11. Ongoing dialogue and consultation with representative NGOs in the field on potential actions, measures and projects in the field.

12. Collaboration and partnership with VODAFONE, regarding the launch in our country of the dedicated application - Bright Sky (as part of a global plan) that can be used by all women affected by situations of domestic violence (with information about the real support provided by state institutions/services and NGOs, recommendations, legislation, contact details, etc.). The application was launched on 7 May 2020.

13. Develop a personal safety plan for domestic violence victims. Its use in the specialised call centre/0800 500 333.

14. Collaboration and partnership with the Commission for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (Chamber of Deputies), Romanian Women's Lobby and the National College of Pharmacists, on initiating a campaign to support and inform DV victims through pharmacies (use of a code).

15. Initiation of a dialogue with the Federation of the Hotel Industry in Romania (FIHR) for implementation of a Support Programme for victims of domestic violence (allocation in each county of a number of rooms to accommodate domestic violence victims in collaboration with DGASPC). This initiative is to be explored only according to the needs analysis at county/national level.

16. Carrying out an online support action/campaign to support victims of domestic violence by co-opting personalities/public persons to promote messages of encouragement and trust in the intervention of the authorities.

17. Initiate a dialogue with national store networks: Carrefour, Kaufland, Mega Image on information and support actions for victims of domestic violence.

18. Initiation of a dialogue with companies that provide online deliveries: Avon, eMAG (the largest online retailer nationwide) for the implementation of initiatives in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (transmission of messages/recommendations (Safety List, unique dedicated number, etc.) To support domestic violence victims by including them in dispatched packages) - a campaign with the Avon Foundation is underway.

19. Collaboration with Trade Unions and Employers that are part of the Social Dialogue Commission/working groups set up at ANES level, in order to request support for informing potential victims in situations of domestic violence regarding the application of protection measures provided

by law: OPP, OP, access to social services, use of the Personal Safety Plan for domestic violence victims.

20. Elaboration of a Protocol of collaboration with ANOFM in order to support the activities of the 42 Vocational Counselling Offices (recently established at the level of each county/DGASPC, in order to guide vocational and support the socio-professional integration of victims of domestic violence, especially in the context of dynamics labour market generated by COVID-19

21. Exploring the working hypothesis regarding access no. single emergency 112 by victims of domestic violence at risk by using a code designed not to alert the aggressor in connection with the immediate intervention of the police.

22. Making and broadcasting a message of public interest on television stations.

Multi-sectoral services, programmes and mechanisms

1. At a national level, there is a Free Telephone Line for Victims of Domestic Violence, a social service set up in accordance with the provisions of Article 24 of the Istanbul Convention, with continuous programme, 24 hours/7 days.

The free telephone line for victims of domestic violence, namely the unique number 0800 500 333, is served by a number of five operators whose salaries are provided by ANES.

Romania has a national emergency telephone line for women which started on 27 November 2015 and is one of the ten EU member states (referring to 28 member states) who have national hotlines for women (Helplines), which are both free and operate non-stop 24/7.

Any number of victims of domestic violence, as well as potential witnesses or other persons who are aware of violence of this kind and who need support, information and counselling, can make free calls both on the Romanian territory and abroad.

Beneficiaries receive primary counselling of psychological and social assistance, guidance and guidance to specialised institutions/services according to detailed needs.

Managing calls received through the call-centre emergency telephone line or cases is done on the basis of an operational procedure approved at ANES level, setting out a set of standards, rules and steps that are followed by all call operators centres with a view to achieving a uniform and coherent response and call resolution framework.

2. ANES actively participates annually in the initial and ongoing training of police officers through a constant partnership with the Institute for Public Order Studies focusing on two training modules addressing domestic violence and gender equality. Within these training programmes the focus moves on the practical side by proposing case studies and exercises.

3. ANES is part of the Reference Group that provides support for the implementation of the project: "Effective Criminal Justice System Strategies and Practices to Combat Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe" ("Effective strategies and practices in criminal justice for combating gender-based violence in Europe" East"), funded by the OSCE and the Council of Europe (April 2018-April 2020) and implemented by the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police. The project is particularly important for reforming the working and intervention modalities by training specialists with responsibilities in preventing and combating domestic violence and improving co-operation in order to promote and respect equal opportunities between women and men and to prevent and combat violence based on gender and addresses both the senior management of the judiciary/the criminal side, through the national co-ordination groups, as well as to the practitioners in criminal matters, through the activities of capacity building. A number of 120 specialists in the criminal field will

participate in the activities of professional capacity building and will acquire practical knowledge and skills to prevent and respond effectively to the phenomenon of gender violence. Also, a total number of 15,000 police officers who are at the beginning of their careers in this field of activity will receive practical information on how to work properly for the needs of victims of gender-based violence, 15,000 potential victims of vulnerable groups will receive useful information on rights and, through awareness-raising activities, approximately 100,000 people will be informed and held accountable for their role as change agent.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

1. Other important measures regarding women in time of COVID

Regarding women working on the “frontline” during the COVID-19 crisis and on the impact on women’s employment/job losses, the following measures have been established:

- for the medical staff (out of which circa. 75% are women) – flexible working hours, financial bonuses are granted and accommodation is provided in hotel regime;
- a Protocol of collaboration with the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) is being developed in order to support the activity of the 42 county vocational counselling offices set up to provide vocational guidance and to support the socio-professional reintegration of DV victims, in the context of the labour market dynamics generated by COVID-19 (post pandemic);
- a working group was established in order to evaluate the possibility of extending some ongoing programmes/projects also for women at risk due to COVID-19 (the extension of vocational counselling and vocational training, currently available for DV victims, to all risk situation);
- Free days may be granted to one of the parents for the supervision of the children, in case of suspension of classes or temporary closure of the educational establishments, due to adverse weather conditions or other extreme situations decreed by the competent authorities. The amount of the allowance for each day off is 75% of the basic salary, but no more than the daily equivalent of 75% of the gross average wage used to substantiate the state social insurance budget (Law No. 95/2020).

As a general rule, the regulations adopted during the state of emergency (by military ordinances) establish for the local public authorities the obligation to identify and keep records of vulnerable persons groups and to ensure their care, including food delivery.

Also, the Government supports the payment of the technical unemployment benefit for the persons that cannot work during the state of emergency established due to COVID-19 health situation.

By Law No. 19/2020 on granting days off to parents for the supervision of children, in case of temporary closure of schools, there are granted days off to one of the parents for supervision of children, in case of temporary closure of schools where they are enrolled, as a result of weather conditions or other extreme situations so decreed by the competent authorities with responsibilities in the field and the allowance for each day off is paid from the chapter on staff costs within the budget for income and expenditure of the employer and is in quantum of 75% of the corresponding salary for one working day, but not more than the daily correspondent of 75% of the average gross earnings used to substantiate the state social insurance budget.

Also, with regard to the impact on women in terms of employment/job loss, we note that a working group has been set up at the level of ANES in order to identify measures to support women, measures that can be correlated with the projects being implemented by our institution. Thus, the opportunity to offering vocational counselling and free training with the support of ANOFM, to all women at risk generated by COVID-19 as well as psychological counselling for overcoming crisis situations and reintegration into the labour market is being analysed.

We mention that at this moment this measure is available for women victims of domestic violence. At the same time, ANES has initiated the dialogue with public figures as well as media companies for

the large-scale dissemination during the state of emergency of all available services for victims of domestic violence and the measures they can benefit from.

At the same time, a series of measures have been adopted through the Military Ordinances aimed at supporting the elderly and persons with disabilities, including women during the state of emergency, so that local public administration authorities have the obligation to identify and keep records of the vulnerable people as well as to ensure their care, including by delivering food at home.

Technical unemployment shall also be provided for persons who are no longer able to work during the state of emergency.

According to the Decision of the Superior Council of the Magistracy No. 417/24 March 2020, the protection order was included within the cases that can be judge during the emergency situation.

The same provisions were established at the moment of the emergency situation prolongation, by the adoption of the Decision No. 707/30 April 2020 of the Section for Judges of the Superior Council of the Magistracy.

2. In order to provide financial support for the development of all working tools and instruments for the implementation of primary legislation, ANES has developed a number of projects that are currently in different stages:

- The predefined project “Support for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Romania”, which aims to facilitate the implementation of the Istanbul Convention under the Justice Programme financed by the Kingdom of Norway through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism for 2014-2021 (under the Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 between the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of Romania dated 13.10.2016). The predefined project will be focused on the development of at least ten rape centres and 8 help centres for aggressors at the local level, coupled with the elaboration of working procedures and specialised intervention programmes for aggressors in order to prevent the relapse of domestic violence acts.

- The VENUS project for combating violence against women and domestic violence.

The project aims to develop measures focused on the integrated and unitary approach of social services in order to create and develop an integrated, national network of protected shelters, support groups and vocational counselling for victims of domestic violence. In this regard, the creation of a national network of 42 sheltered that will provide hosting, information, counselling and support services in order to achieve the transfer to active, independent living and social rehabilitation and also reintegration of women victims of domestic violence. (The national network of protected shelters was launched on 4 March 2020).

- The project “Gender-based budgeting in public policies”, partnership leader “Corona” Foundation Iasi, in partnership with the “Community Mediation and Security Centre” Foundation and ANES.

General objective: Increasing the capacity of NGOs to get involved in the formulation and promotion of alternative proposals to public policies initiated by the Government in the field of gender budgeting, aiming at the appropriate allocation of financial resources taking into account the gender dimension.

- Gender-based budgeting in public policies.

Training sessions for NGOs and roundtables on gender budgeting were organised.

- Four public hearing sessions were organised with representatives of institutions with responsibilities in the field of gender equality and the prevention and combating of domestic violence at the local level.

- at this point ANES is in a process of the elaboration of the project application “TRUE - Positive change through integrated action in turbulent times!” funded by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, under the “Domestic and Gender Violence” programme.

Proposals for measures to improve the legal framework for the years 2021-2024

1. Joint Order on the approval of the working procedure on measures to prevent cases of domestic violence (MMPS/ANES-MAI-MJ).
2. Joint Order approving the interinstitutional working procedure on the reporting, collection and monitoring of data on domestic violence (MMPS/ANES-MAI-MJ).
3. Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection on the approval of the unitary methodology and a standardised set of tools at national level for working with aggressors.
4. Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection on the approval of the set of tools necessary for the emergency intervention of mobile teams in situations of domestic violence.
5. Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection on the approval of the unitary methodology on legal advice for victims of domestic and gender-based violence.
6. Decision on approval of the guidelines needed by local authorities to develop local strategies and action plans for preventing and combating domestic violence.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.2 Policy changes

In Romania, gender equality is a fundamental principle of human rights regulated by the law, with a wide application in various fields of activity with important economic, social, political and cultural implications.

Besides the Romanian Constitution the principle of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men is enshrined both at the legislative and public policies levels. This principle is regulated by Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, republished, amended and supplemented, which provides for the measures to promote equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in all spheres of public life in Romania and defines terms such as: equal opportunities between women and men, discrimination on the grounds of sex, direct or indirect discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment, equal pay for work of equal value, positive actions, multiple discrimination, sex, gender, gender stereotypes, gender-based violence. This law contains also specific chapters in which the measures regarding the respect of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in the labour market, participation in decision making, education, elimination of gender roles and stereotypes are presented.

At the same time, the Government Ordinance No. 137/ 2000, republished, regulates the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination, including the discrimination on gender criteria.

3.3 Institutional changes

Through the predefined project, “Support for The Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Romania” implemented by the NAE0, will be envisaged the development of individualised training plans, collective training strategy and training manuals for the staff of the NAE0 and other institutions under the methodological co-ordination.

Thus, an evaluation will be carried out and will be developed Individualised Training Plans and a Collective Training Strategy.

Based on the abovementioned deliverables, the training materials (manual) will be elaborated and delivered to the participants at the training session but also to the other relevant authorities with

responsibilities in the field: General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection (47), Territorial Labour Inspectorate (42), Police County Inspectorate (42) County Commissions for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (42 CCEO) , Inter-ministerial Committee for the Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence (12), the National Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (15).

ANES actively participates annually in the initial and ongoing training of police officers through a constant partnership with the Institute for Public Order Studies focusing on two training modules addressing domestic violence and gender equality. Within these training programmes the focus moves on the practical side by proposing case studies and exercises.

ANES is part of the Reference Group that provides support for the implementation of the project: “Effective Criminal Justice System Strategies and Practices to Combat Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe” (“Effective strategies and practices in criminal justice for combating gender-based violence in Europe East”), funded by the OSCE and the Council of Europe (April 2018-April 2020) and implemented by the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police. The project is particularly important for reforming the working and intervention modalities by training specialists with responsibilities in preventing and combating domestic violence and improving co-operation in order to promote and respect equal opportunities between women and men and to prevent and combat violence based on gender and addresses both the senior management of the judiciary/the criminal side, through the national co-ordination groups, as well as to the practitioners in criminal matters, through the activities of capacity building. A number of 120 specialists in the criminal field will participate in the activities of professional capacity building and will acquire practical knowledge and skills to prevent and respond effectively to the phenomenon of gender violence. Also, a total number of 15,000 police officers who are at the beginning of their careers in this field of activity will receive practical information on how to work properly for the needs of victims of gender-based violence, 15,000 potential victims of vulnerable groups will receive useful information on rights and, through awareness-raising activities, approximately 100,000 people will be informed and held accountable for their role as change agent.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

The project “Women during and after coronavirus: Information, Research and Advocacy for Gender Equality”, funded by the Active Citizens Fund Romania Programme, Call 4 Human Rights Awareness and Equal Treatment, with an implementation period of six months and a total budget of 16,639€.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.2 Policy changes

The following specific measures are included in the new National Strategy on Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the period 2018-2021:

- a) Carrying out analyses on the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making positions in the central public administration;
- b) Carrying out an analysis on the participation of women and men in presidential elections;
- c) Carrying out an analysis of the participation of women and men in local elections;
- d) Carrying out an analysis on the participation of women and men in parliamentary elections;
- e) Supporting initiatives to adopt affirmative measures in order to increase the number of women in the political or economic decision-making process;
- f) Development of initiatives in order to adopt affirmative measures to increase the number of women in operations and missions at all levels of the armed forces;
- g) Organise campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of women's presence in the management of listed companies at the Bucharest Stock Exchange (BVB);

- h) Conduct a study on the inclusion in the revised Corporate Governance Code of regulations aimed at reducing the existing gap between the share of women and men within the boards of director of Romanian companies listed on the BVB;
- i) Organising information/training sessions to increase women's participation in political, public and private decision-making.

At the same time, the action plan of the National Strategy on Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the period 2018-2021 includes specific measures on the reconciliation of work, family and private life for the year 2018 such as:

- a) organise campaigns, actions and measures to increase the involvement of men/fathers in family life
- b) strengthening and improving the legal framework for the creation of mechanisms to support parents and to ensure a balance between family and professional life,
- c) campaigning on the importance of raising awareness of young people's reintegration into the labour market and training for young parents.
- d) encouraging the conclusion of flexible working hours and work for parents.
- e) awareness campaigning on the application of alternative working tools, namely flexible working time and work for parents (distance work).

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Under the gender equality week which starts every year on 8 May, ANES has launched a series of campaigns oriented in special on promoting the importance of women in decision-making, leadership, political life.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

1. Within the HeForShe Campaign conducted by UN Women, Romania, has assumed three specific commitments until 2020:
 - Commitment 1. Training of specialists: experts and technicians in the field of equal opportunities in the central and local public administration;
 - Commitment 2. Launch of a unique integrated information system for reporting, managing and prosecuting cases of domestic violence and violence against women;
 - Commitment 3. Develop and implement programmes on the involvement of girls and boys in social, political and economic life: mobilising over 100,000 young people.
2. At the same time, at national level, in the field of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, in accordance with the stage of implementation of the OECD recommendation on gender equality in public life (to which Romania has expressed its intention to adhere), ANES advanced important issues of national interest on: streamlining the implementation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming initiatives and ensuring a balanced participation of women and men in decision-making and leadership.

These will be achieved through awareness campaigns for women and men on the need to involve women in public, political, economic life, but also through affirmative action to achieve in fact accelerated equality of opportunity and treatment between women and men in decision making and closing the historical gap of the representation of women. Thus, we will implement a bilateral project funded by EEA grants, in order to carry out a study visit for an exchange of good practices in the field of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men from the perspective of Iceland, as an OECD member state, with experience in the field covered by the Council Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (No C (2015) 164), SGG will be the Project Leader and the OECD, Iceland and ANES as partners.

3. We are also currently collaborating with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - Mission in Romania, to develop the project sheet entitled "Migrant Women: The Path to

Integration” that IOM is developing and intends to send to obtain funding from part of DG Home through the Migration, Asylum and Integration Fund (FAMI). The project would involve ILO Missions from the Netherlands (Lead Partner), Austria, Spain and Romania. The main objective of the project is to support the inclusion of migrant women from the countries participating in the project by organising various activities with their involvement, but also of some local and/or central institutions/authorities.

- At the same time, during 2020, at the level of ANES it was establish an working group for identifying the best practices models to be promoted when companies and institutions will be building their own internal gender equality working plan, as well as when appointing the gender equality expert/technician within the company/institution.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

Having regard the transposition of the Directive No. 2012/29/EU was adopted the Emergency Ordinance No. 24/2019 for amending and supplementing Law No. 211/2004 regarding some measures to ensure the protection of victims of crime, as well as other normative acts. This normative act provides the non-discrimination on gender criteria principle.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

National Strategy on Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the period 2018-2021.

6.3 Institutional changes

During 2019-2020 ANES has signed a series of protocol collaboration with private companies/corporations and institution in order to promote gender equality principle in all policies. In this regard, at the beginning of 2021 ANES together with all relevant actors in the field will launch a series of campaigns in order to make known the legislative changes from the perspective of gender mainstreaming. (Law No. 178/2018, amending and supplementing Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men, was aimed at introducing the definition of gender violence, according to Article 3(d) of the Istanbul Convention, as well as regulating the possibility of designation of an equal opportunities expert or equal opportunities technician at the level of each employer with over 50 employees and their main attributions.)

One of the main tasks of the gender equality expert is focused on analysing the context of the occurrence and evolution of the phenomenon of gender discrimination as well as the non-observance of the principle of equal opportunities for women and men and the recommendation of appropriate solutions for the observance of this principle, and formulating recommendations/observations/proposals to prevent/manage/remedy the context of risk that could lead to violation of the principle of equal opportunities between women and men, respecting the principle of confidentiality.

Regarding the collaboration mechanisms existing at national level, according to Law No. 202/2002, the National Commission for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (CONES) is working under the co-ordination of the State Secretary of NAEO. CONES is made up of representatives of ministries and other specialised bodies of the central public administration subordinated to the Government or autonomous administrative authorities, trade union organisations and representative employers' associations at national level, as well as representatives of non-governmental organisations, with an activity recognised in domain, designated by consensus thereof. CONES has the role of supporting the activities carried out by NAEO with an important role in introducing the gender perspective into the policies and programmes developed at each level of activity.

- Based on the provisions of the Law No. 202/2002, starting with 2005, the County Commissions for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (COJES) function in the co-ordination of NAEO in all territorial administrative units of Romania (42 counties and Bucharest) information and advisory structures having as their main responsibility the promotion and implementation at local level of the values and principles of non-discrimination based on sex.
- The Romanian Government has become aware of the importance of the interinstitutional co-operation and civil society involvement, and from this perspective, on 5 October 2016, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence was created through a Governmental Memorandum (in response to Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention, as a body which must ensure the implementation of the Istanbul Convention through the co-operation of all relevant actors in the field.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Project “Gender-based budgeting in public policies”, partnership leader - “Corona” Foundation Iasi, in partnership with the “Community Mediation and Security Centre” Foundation and ANES.

General objective: Increasing the capacity of NGOs to get involved in the formulation and promotion of alternative proposals to public policies initiated by the Government in the field of gender budgeting, aiming at the appropriate allocation of financial resources taking into account the gender dimension. - Gender-based budgeting in public policies.

Training sessions for NGOs and round tables on gender budgeting were organised.

- Four public hearing sessions were organised with representatives of institutions with responsibilities in the field of gender equality and the prevention and combating of domestic violence at the local level.

At the same time, for the field of equal opportunities and treatment ANES is a partner in the elaboration and implementation of the following projects:

- INTERACT - Active participation and integrated services for migrants from Romania.

Call for project proposals launched by the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) (FAMI / 20.01)

Funding through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, 2020 Programme - Project under approval - Main applicant: IOM Romania.

Partners: Schottener Social Services Foundation, AID Rom, Global Help Association (Craiova)

- Migrant women: the path to integration - (Enabling Networks, Agency Building and Local integration for the Empowerment of migrant women in Europe). Funded by DG Home (AMIF-2019-AG-CALL), Project under approval.

Lead applicant International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the Dutch Mission. Along with the IOM Mission in the Netherlands, IOM Missions in Austria, Spain, Romania would be involved in the project.

- Strengthening Gender Equality in Public Life in Romania: Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership.

Project funded by Norwegian and EEA Grants. Approved project, in the start-up phase of implementation.

- Introduction of gender budgeting in public institutions - Funded by the EEA and Norwegian Grants Programme 2014-2021 - Call 5 - Project under approval.

The project will be implemented by the Catalactic Association (Partnership Leader) in partnership with ANES and the Quality of Life Research Institute (ICCV).

6.5 Other pertinent developments

Proposals for measures for measures to improve the legal framework for the years 2021-2024

1. Decision on the approval of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2027 - Project "Inclusion and equal opportunities post 2020 - National strategic policy framework for social inclusion and equal opportunities post 2020", SIPOCA Code 653.
2. Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection regarding the establishment and functioning of the National Council for the Integration of the Gender Perspective in the Academic Environment.
3. Law on amending and supplementing Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and equal treatment for women and men, republished, as subsequently amended and supplemented, the obligation to have an equal opportunities expert, the obligation to organise primary information courses for public employers (annually), encouraging the increase of women's share in positions with a high degree of decision-making/gender quotas).
4. Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection on the approval of the framework action plans for the application of the legal provisions on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men (both in internal human resources management policies and in policies, programmes and projects specific to the field of activity, according to Article 23 2 paragraph (1) of Law No. 202/2002, updated).

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The year 2020 has been a year full of challenges so far regarding the implementation of the new laws regulations in the field of gender equality and gender-based violence in the sense of gathering all the relevant actors in the field in order to understand their new attributions and obligations that were generated by the news laws which were regulated according with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention, especially in the context of COVID-19 pandemic which it has made it even more difficult to reach the victims of domestic violence due to the restrictions imposed at national level.

It has been still a year of transition but having regard of the new situation that we are confronting with it has been finally understood that progresses cannot be done without interinstitutional co-operation and co-ordination and without the involvement of the private sector and civil society.

SERBIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

The National Employment Service emphasises the relevance of continuous professional development and education to all job seekers. *The concept of life-long learning and education is getting more and more present and is a much more common requirement of employers going in this direction.*

The National Employment Service provides opportunities to persons for the purpose of motivating and enabling unemployed persons to be successful in active job search through developing techniques and skills necessary for job search by involving the job seekers in the *Club for Job Seeking* and the *Training for Active Job Seeking*.

When referring to specific knowledge, the National Employment Service organises *Training for the Labour Market* having for their objective acquisition of specific knowledge and skills, for the purpose of raising competency and competition of unemployed individuals on the labour market. This way, unemployed persons acquire new knowledge, skills and abilities.

The National Employment Service also organises *specialist information training* which represent acquisition of new knowledge, skills and abilities for unemployed persons in the field of information technologies, with the objective of increasing the level of competition and employability. The objective of the programme is enabling acquisition of basic knowledge and skills of programming in various programme languages to unemployed persons without any knowledge in the field of programming, within a relatively short time span. Such programming courses represent a ground for all students to enable them to independently upgrade the programmes in the future and improve their knowledge and skills in the field of programming.

The Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Banca Intesa and the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management organised gatherings in April and May 2018 for the purpose of improving the business activities of women companies with implementation of a diagnostics tool Business Lens in five regional chambers of commerce (in Kruševac, Subotica, Sombor, Čačak and Valjevo). Female participants were given the opportunity to familiarise with the tool for business self-assessment and assess their overall business and managing capacities, as well as the business performances in seven key business areas: financial management and performance, knowledge about the market, marketing and sales, human resources, strategies and organisations, risk management and operations. Support was ensured for 65 women entrepreneurs in the process of business self-assessment, based on which a non-financial programme of support was prepared for women entrepreneurs delivered to the minister without portfolio responsible for innovations and technological development. After conducting an analysis, it was stated that women have least knowledge and business skills in four areas of business – human resources, strategy and organisation, risk management, operations. Since these fields are very significant for sustainability of further business activities, the plan for the upcoming period is to hire an expert/professional to help women in attain better understanding of the aforementioned fields, to strengthen their potentials and thus improve their business success. After the held gatherings and based on the tools Business Lens used for business self-assessment, women entrepreneurs were given reports on which segment of business they should improve so as to be economically sustainable.

Additionally, the Centre for Programmes of Support to Economy and Micro, Small and Medium Companies of the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Serbia, in co-operation with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the UniCredit Bank, organised one-day workshops in June 2019 for women-owned companies on the subject “How to efficiently promote small business on social networks” in Novi Sad and Belgrade. Continuation of these training courses was planned in the fourth quarter of 2019. These workshops contributed to women entrepreneurs

using information technologies and communication tools in their business to a much greater proportion.

1.3 Institutional changes

After the elections and the formation of the Government in Serbia, three new ministries were formed: The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, the Ministry of Family Care and Demography, and the Ministry of Rural Care.

1.4 Research and awareness raising.

The Republic Statistical Office and UNICEF conducted the Multiple Indicators of the Status of Women and Children Survey 2019 (MICS 6). Data were collected with financial and technical assistance from UNICEF and financial support from the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, UNFPA. and the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

“Economic value of unpaid care in the Republic of Serbia” research conducted within the project Gender Responsible Governance - Redistribution of Unpaid Care, led by UN Women in Serbia in co-operation with the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia and with the financial support of the Fund for Good administration of the British Government. The analysis showed that unpaid work accounts for 21.5% of GDP, and that the world average is 9%. On a daily basis, it amounts to 2,918 dinars, 546€ per month and 6,560€ per year. During the state of emergency, the men were surprised at how much work women do during the day. It was pointed out that the development of services in the community is the key to reducing these jobs, and at the same time the state would benefit from the amount of taxes. It turned out that in families where the division of labour is approximate, the so-called management of the entire family is again on the woman. It is also important to motivate men to “maternity leave”. At the same time, in addition to improved services, introduce foster care for the elderly, as this would be a significant relief for those suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The Government passed the *Women Empowerment Programme in the Field of Information and Communication Technologies for the period 2019-2020*. This Programme stipulates special goals and objectives for improving participation of women in the ICT sector; programme measures and activities whose implementations should contribute to reducing the gender gap in the digital sector; social and economic empowerment of women; as well as regional representation of women in this field. The target Programme groups are as follows: girl pupils attending the final grades of elementary school, girl students attending grammar schools, girl students attending secondary vocations schools, girl students attending technical faculties; women interested in acquiring knowledge and skills in ICT field; women media workers, women journalists – women from rural areas; women pensioners. The authority responsible for the programme activity implementation is the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, while the partners in the implementation are the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, faculties, non-governmental organisations, ICT companies, companies applying ICT technologies in their operations, IT community and others. On the fourth Thursday in April as of 2010, at the initiative of the Republic of Serbia, *Girls in ICT Day* is annually marked and celebrated around the world. The Global Network of Women ICT Decision-Makers project, established under the auspices of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), includes, beside the involvement of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of the Republic of Serbia, the participation of institutions, sectors, universities and companies in the field of new technologies from around the world. The goal of the action is to bring closer to girls and women information and communication technologies, a field where women and girls are underrepresented. More than 240,000 girls and women participated to this day in 7,200 events in this field in 160 countries.

The government adopted on 30 January 2020 *Strategy for Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025*. The Strategy's general goal is the improvement of the public information system through a harmonised framework of positive legal

regulations guaranteeing the freedom of expression, freedom of the media, safety of journalists, media pluralism, developed media market, empowered journalist profession, educated citizens and institutions capable of applying statutory regulations. Special goals and objectives of this strategic document are as follows: 1) improved security, social and economical and professional conditions for work of journalists and media workers; 2) established functional, sustainable and fair media market protected against political influence; 3) functional, competent, professional and open institutions disposing of protective mechanisms against external pressures, and consistently applying public policies and regulations; 4) quality media pluralism and diversity satisfying the need for informing different social groups; 5) improved professional knowledge and developed digital competencies of citizens, institutions, media, journalists and media workers.

The *Law on Information Security*, passed in 2019, regulates protective measures against security risks in information and communication systems, responsibilities of legal persons in managing and using information and communication systems, and determining competent authorities for the implementation of protective measures, co-ordination between the protection factors and monitoring proper application of protective measures. The Law stipulates the establishment of special centres for the prevention of security risks in the information and communication systems in different sectors, whose records are kept in the National CERT. In the Republic of Serbia, beside the National CERT, there are nine separate CERTs, among which is also the CERT Share Foundation specifically involved in the protection of rights of civic and online media, providing at the same time technical and legal assistance related to the media information security. During the monitoring implemented by the Share Foundation, 487 cases of breach of digital rights and freedoms in the Republic of Serbia since 2014 have been documented.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Structure of judgements from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019						
Type of offence	Total number of persons on whom a first instance judgement was passed	Total number of persons on whom a conviction was passed	Total number of persons with no penal sentence	Total number of imprisonment sentences	Judgements of acquittal	Judgements rejecting charges
Article 113	83	81	0	81	2	0
Article 114	53	52	0	52	0	1

According to the available statistical data contained in the annual reports on the work of public prosecutor's offices for 2018 and 2019:

- *The criminal offence of murder referred to in Article 113 of the Criminal Code* was committed in 2019, to the detriment of 9 women, 57 men and 2 minors, while in 2018, 95 women, 94 men and 96 minors were harmed by committing this criminal offence.
- *The criminal offence of aggravated murder referred to in Article 114 of the Criminal Code* was committed to the detriment of 11 women, 14 men and 2 minors during 2019, and 12 women, 49 men and 1 minor during 2018.
- *The criminal offence of manslaughter in a heat of passion referred to in Article 115 of the Criminal Code* was committed to the detriment of 9 women, 28 men and 1 minor during 2018.
- *The criminal offence of domestic violence referred to in Article 194 of the Criminal Code*, was committed in 2019, to the detriment of 4,493 women, 1,386 men and 521 minors, while in 2018, 5,166 women, 1,861 men and 274 minors were harmed by committing this criminal offence.

2.2 Policy changes

At the initiative of the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality, a gender analysis of the situation was made with a set of short-term and medium-term measures to eliminate the negative effects of COVID-19 on women and men, and on gender equality. The document focuses, among other things, on the necessary measures to be taken in relation to violence against women and gender-based violence.

The campaign was conducted with the aim of raising public awareness and supporting women not to suffer and to report violence even in a crisis situation, through numerous public addresses by the Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality. The websites of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice incorporate and make available to the public all relevant information for reporting and for protecting women from violence and gender-based violence.

The group *Journalists Against Violence* was additionally supported in order to disseminate information via social networks on the available support and assistance to women victims of violence by the state and CSOs, as well as on the ways to report violence. In this way the incentive to report violence was given not only to the victims, but also to the whole society (neighbours, friends, etc.), as reporting violence is more difficult in a situation of isolation or self-isolation.

In the frame of the project “Improved Security of Women in Serbia”, funded by the Norwegian Embassy and implemented in co-operation with UN Women, a support is provided through direct institutional grants for 22 local CSOs that provide psychosocial and legal assistance and support services through local SOS helplines for women victims of violence and gender-based violence. This is a short-term measure that aims to make the said service available to all potential victims, online and via email and Skype, instant chat and through social networks. Initial contacts with the victim are thus established via SMS and Viber messages.

With the support of the private sector and humanitarian organisations, hygiene and medical products as well as TV equipment and toys for children were donated to all safe houses in Serbia to enable attending online classes for children victims of violence due to the temporary closure of all primary and secondary schools and the University. Additional assistance in protective and hygiene products was provided for 11 safe houses with the financial support from UN Women and in co-operation with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit.

Also, the available funds from the IPA 2016 Project “Key Steps to Gender Equality”, implemented in co-operation with UN Women, were redirected to mobile, volunteer teams and emergency teams in order to provide direct assistance to the most vulnerable categories of women at the local level.

In eight Prosecutors’ Offices an online proceeding was introduced, which proved to be very effective. With the support of UNDP, the improvement of accessibility of their work was piloted by using the Zoom application for holding meetings of interdepartmental co-ordination and co-operation groups that discuss cases of domestic violence and violence against women at the local level. Feedback on the benefits of this method of work, received from five piloted Prosecutors’ Offices, indicates that this method of work allows them to consider in the first place, more ongoing cases, that all information is currently available to them, that they spend less time holding meetings, and that this method of work is far more effective and efficient, and thus the progress in proceedings has been observed in these Prosecutors’ Offices.

2.3 Institutional changes

The Deputy Public Prosecutor who chairs the Group, representatives of the police and the Centre for Social Work participate in the work of the Group. The meetings are attended, if necessary, by representatives of the National Employment Service, health, educational and other relevant institutions, as well as the victims themselves.

During 2019, the Co-ordination and Co-operation Groups held 2,818 meetings. These meetings were attended by 194 victims. A total of 50,985 cases of domestic violence were considered and 18,646 individual victim protection and support plans were developed.

Also, in the area of the 41st, out of a total of 58 basic public prosecutor's offices, a total of 87 *subgroups for co-ordination and co-operation were formed for individual municipalities* from the area of local jurisdiction of those prosecutor's offices.

Representatives of the groups and subgroups hold meetings according to the dynamics prescribed by law. At meetings of the groups and subgroups for co-ordination and co-operation, current and newly received cases are discussed, measures for ending court proceedings are proposed and plans for protection and support of victims are developed.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence" (2018), "Why we have to fight together against domestic violence" (2019) and the collection "Proposal for improving the work of the group for co-ordination and co-operation" (2019).

The Ministry of Interior has also prepared two promotional videos that were shown on the Serbia's public broadcasting service, and which aim to encourage victims of domestic violence to report violence. Representatives of this ministry also participated in television shows on the topic of combating violence against women in the family and partner relationships.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The Protector of Citizens and the Autonomous Women's Centre, with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, conducted in-depth research on the application of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence in the territory of the City of Belgrade. This research is the first of its kind, which analyses the actions of the competent authorities in the system of protection of victims of domestic violence. Data from the submitted records of the guardianship authority were used; a copy of the minutes from the Co-ordination and Co-operation Groups, as well as individual plans for the protection and support of victims of violence, taken at the meetings of the groups during May 2018. Results of the research were then compared with the opinions of representatives of all departments of the City Centre for Social Work in Belgrade given during the focus group discussions and then published in the Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on the Work of Co-ordination and Co-operation Groups in the City of Belgrade. Within this project, the research will be continued first in Niš and then in other cities in Serbia, followed by seminars.

The report was presented at the Round Table held on 8 October 2020 in Belgrade. Presentation of the report was organised within the project "Effective Policies and Harmonised Practices in Providing Support and Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence" conducted by the Autonomous Women's Centre, the Protector of Citizens and the Forum of Judges of Serbia, and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Nothing new. See 3.2

3.2 Policy changes

The pandemic had no impacts on women's access to justice. Namely, all Basic and Higher Public Prosecutors' Offices, as well as Basic and Higher Courts in the Republic of Serbia competent to act on criminal charges for the criminal offence of domestic violence, worked during the state of emergency and provided protection, and were making decisions in cases of domestic violence.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Justice, a priority is provided in the conduct of criminal proceedings in which detention has been ordered or proposed, cases of domestic violence, in cases in which a minor is accused or injured, etc. The mentioned recommendations of the Ministry of Justice enable working from home for certain categories of employees and reorganisation of work for others, so as to ensure the presence of those employees who are indispensable for a smooth operation.

Special departments for combating domestic violence in the First and the Second Basic Public Prosecutors' Offices in Belgrade and the Basic Public Prosecutor's Office in Nis, as well as persons designated for liaison (contact persons) at the level of the Public Prosecutors' Offices worked during the state of emergency and acted with urgency in cases of reported domestic violence. Co-ordination and co-operation groups formed in the area of every Basic Public Prosecutor's Office held co-ordination meetings with competent police officers and employees from the social protection centres and developed individual plans for protection and support of victims, as evidenced by the data from the attached tables.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, the High Judicial Council classified cases of domestic violence (including protective measures for victims of violence) as the cases that the Courts would continue to process during the state of emergency, with the clear instructions to prosecute cases of domestic violence before the Courts without delay.

3.3 Institutional changes

See above 3.2.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

The trial in the case of Marija Lukić has ended. According to the decision of the High Court in Krusevac, Milutin Jelacic Jutka was sentenced to three months in prison, for the criminal offense of illicit sexual activity. Marija Lukić is a former associate of Jeličić, a victim of sexual harassment at work by the President of the Municipality of Brus. This is the first case of a man in power going to prison on this basis, and he referred to the highest officials of this country.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

At the beginning of 2020, Serbia increased the minimum required number of women on the electoral lists from one third to 40% the Amendments to the Law on the Election of Deputies and the Law on Local Elections.

4.3 Institutional changes

The new draft Gender Equality Law provides the responsibility of public authorities and companies to take action when there is a noticeably unbalanced gender representation.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The Manual on Implementation of Gender Sensitive Language has been published and disseminated to public sector, academia, media representatives and local self-governments. It was also published on the Co-ordination body for Gender Equality website and broadly promoted at every event organised.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, by which Serbia complied its legislation with the EU *acquis*, was adopted on 22 March 2018. This Law defines that in the process of approving asylum in Serbia any discrimination on any grounds shall be prohibited in particular or reasons of race, skin colour, sex, nationality, social background or a similar status, birth, religion, political or any other beliefs, financial status, culture, language, age or intellectual, sensory or physical disability (Article 7). An asylum seeker shall be interviewed by a person of the same sex and shall be given a translator or interpreter of the same sex, unless when it is not possible, or it makes great difficulties for the body carrying out the asylum procedure (Article 14). The specificity of the situation of asylum seekers with special needs shall be taken into account, such as minors, persons who are totally or partially deprived of work capacity, children separated from parents or guardians, persons with disabilities, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, and persons who faced torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence (Article 15).

In all *asylum centres and reception-transit centres* there is a separate accommodation for women and men who are single. In these centres, women are provided with the access to gynaecologists in the relevant healthcare centre and the access to international organisation in charge of reproductive health of migrants, by which a constant access to information and services is ensured. The accommodation is done with the respect of the principles of non-discrimination, family union, gender equality and a special care is provided to the asylum seekers with special needs. Also, the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund, provides support and co-ordinates the work for the adoption of Standard Operational Procedures for Prevention and Protection of Refugees and Migrants from gender-based violence.

The new *Law on Foreigners*, which implementation started on 3 October 2018, in particular defines the prohibition of forced removal of foreigners to the territory of the country where he/she will be exposed to prosecution due to racial, gender, sexual orientation, and also due to religious or national affiliation, citizenship, membership in a certain social group or political opinion (Article 83, paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Law on Foreigners).

Also, a foreigner must not be forcibly removed to the territory of another country if there is a risk that he/she might be subjected to capital punishment, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, or to the territory where he/she might face serious violation of the rights guaranteed by the Serbian Constitution.

A special attention is paid to minors – foreigners found in illegal residence on the territory of Serbia, who are in the process of return and for the purpose of preparation for the return or execution of preparatory removal may be accommodated in the Reception centre for foreigners together with their parents, guardians or legal representatives only as the final measure and for the shortest possible period. Minor persons staying in the reception centres for foreigners, depending on the length of their stay, and in line with the age have the access to primary education, and are also provided with the participation in recreational activities (play), adequate for their age.

When providing accommodation for families in a reception centre for foreigners waiting for forceable removal, a separate accommodation is provided to ensure their privacy.

When it comes to unaccompanied minors the law defines that they will be provided with the assistance of services for protection of children and youth (Article 75, paragraph 4), and also they must not be forcibly removed, unless in case when the competent body is convinced that the minor would be returned to a family member, guardian or adequate childcare institution (Article 83, paragraph 4).

Article 83 of the Law on Foreigners and Article 16, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Rulebook on house rules and rules of staying in reception centres for foreigners, define that the surveillance of the procedure of forced removal is performed by the Protector of Citizens in line with the law on the protector of citizens and the Law on the Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Article 61 of the Law on Foreigners particularly defines the approval of temporary residence to foreign citizens due to humanitarian reasons, including minors who are abandoned or are victims of organised crime or are left without parental care due to some other reasons.

5.2 Policy changes

The entire staff of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration engaged in permanent and reception centres for asylum is continuously trained in co-operation with relevant MoD and CSOs in the field of protection, work and treatment of vulnerable categories of migrants, identification of potential victims of trafficking, gender-based violence, etc. , in order to provide adequate support to migrants and prevent various forms of violence. All cases of suspicion are immediately referred to the competent services in accordance with standard operating procedures. The established operational procedures that are applied and improved, depending on the situation on the ground, refer to the prevention of gender-based violence in asylum centres and reception and transit centres, to the protection of refugee/migrant children, as well as to the treatment of victims of trafficking. In 2019, it was held through seminars, training, and study visits that covered topics such as gender equality and migration, elimination of violence against women, recognition of gender-based violence and human trafficking among migrants, equality of refugee and migrant women, etc. , which were attended by the employees of the centres.

In 2019, the CSO Athens, in co-operation with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, held a series of educational workshops aimed at informing the refugee and migrant population on issues of recognition and protection from human trafficking and other risks. A total of 120 workshops were held, attended by a total of 811 women and children. Regardless of the pandemic and the declared emergency measures, the mechanism for identifying potential victims of human trafficking functioned smoothly and we did not have any recorded cases. Also, according to the data of the Migration Profile for 2019, during 2019, 27 reports of suspicion of human trafficking in a group of migrants were received. There were 18 minors (13 boys and 5 girls) and 9 adults (7 women and 2 men), mostly from Afghanistan (9) and Iran (8). In the nine received applications, it was concluded that there were no elements of human trafficking, so these reports were rejected. The identification procedure was initiated on the basis of 16 applications (30% are females). The identified victims of human trafficking among migrants are from Afghanistan, the Republic of Mali and Pakistan. The adult victims are from the Republic of Mali and Pakistan.

Article 83 of the Law on Foreigners and Article 16, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Rulebook on house rules and rules of staying in reception centres for foreigners, define that the surveillance of the procedure of forced removal is performed by the Protector of Citizens in line with the law on the protector of citizens and the Law on the Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Article 61 of the Law on Foreigners particularly defines the approval of temporary residence to foreign citizens due to humanitarian reasons, including minors who are abandoned or are victims of organised crime or are left without parental care due to some other reasons.

5.3 Institutional changes

Nothing new. In addition:

The Government Decree on Measures for the Prevention and Suppression of the Infectious Disease COVID-19 stipulates that proceedings for the identification of foreign nationals who have not been initiated during the state of emergency shall be initiated within 30 days from the date of termination

of the state of emergency. procedures to consider that foreign citizens are legally residing in the Republic of Serbia.

In addition to the above, it is possible to extend the “C” visa, having in mind humanitarian reasons, i.e. the existence of force majeure (contagious disease), as well as submitting a request for temporary residence on the basis of “Other” for the same reasons.

After the end of the state of emergency, from 11 May 2020, it has been possible and regulated for foreign nationals to schedule requests by e-mail or by calling a certain phone number, where the contacts of all competent organisational units of the Ministry of Interior are published on the website of the Ministry of Interior, which is also one of the measures taken to protect rights of migrants in the Republic of Serbia.

After the decision on declaring a state of emergency was revoked, the officials of the Asylum Office continued to take official actions in accordance with the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection. Official actions are carried out exclusively in asylum centres, which are under the jurisdiction of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, within those that have satisfactory conditions, in order to prevent the spread of the infectious disease COVID-19. This primarily means adequate premises, in which it will be possible to make a sufficient distance between the participants in the asylum procedure, protective equipment (masks, gloves), as well as natural ventilation systems.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Thanks to the selfless support of the EU (about 130 million euros since 2015), as well as other international institutions and donors, including the Swiss Confederation, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs actively contributes to child safety and the safety of Serbian citizens. throughout Europe by working with minors and other migrants in order to acquaint them with the culture, traditions and values of Europe, and by working on active measures to deradicalize and prevent the radicalisation of this population. With those persons who have applied for asylum or who have been granted temporary protection, we are actively working on measures to enable them to be competitive on the labour market in accordance with the Law on Employment of Foreigners and with active measures of the National Employment Service. With the support of international partners, including the Swiss Development Agency, we are conducting training and raising the capacity of social protection institutions to work with the migrant population.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs is the co-ordinator or participates in dozens of smaller or larger projects that contribute to the process of inclusion and capacity development of the migrant population, of which the project “EU Support to Serbia in Migration Management-MADAD 2” of 16,000,000€ funded by the EU Regional Trust Fund MADAD and through which about 500 people are engaged to work with migrants and which directly or indirectly involves 5 state bodies, 15 social welfare institutions, all reception/transit and asylum centres . Also, over 60 health care institutions, 51 schools and educational institutions, as well as the Border Police Administration. The project ended on 12 December 2019, while the next day the programme “Special Measure 6” started, which is financed from IPA 2 funds and which the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs will implement in partnership with the International Organization for Migration. The programme will last for 18 months and will continue to support the social protection system in working with the migrant population, in order to maintain the level and quality of services provided to both migrants and the domestic population.

In addition, we would like to highlight the project “Rapid integration into the labour market of third-country nationals, asylum seekers, refugees and their families” worth 2,700,000 euros, which we are implementing in co-operation with five EU members under the EU Employment and Social Innovation Programme (EaSI), as well as “Improvement of social protection of migrants in a vulnerable position in Serbia”, which we implement with partners from IOM and SDC, which significantly supports and improves the capacity of the social protection system in working with the migrant population.

Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs actively participates in the implementation of the regional IPA 2 project “Regional Support for the Protection of Sensitive Migrations in the Western Balkans and Turkey” which envisages the improvement of human resources in the social protection system for working with migrants, especially the most vulnerable categories such as unaccompanied children and minors.

Regarding the education of migrants and refugees, we emphasize that in accordance with the best interests of the child, all migrants, regardless of their legal status, have access to education. Coverage of the education system in the school year 2019/2020. year reached 98%. Migrant and refugee children and students are included in eight preschools, 52 primary schools and 15 secondary schools. With mentoring support, their progress and achievements are monitored. Students in the final years of primary school are provided with an easier procedure for continuing their secondary education, without taking the final exam and affirmative measures for enrolment in secondary schools in which there are places left after the second enrolment period. According to the Expert Instruction for the Inclusion of Refugee/Asylum Seekers in the Education System, each school where migrant and refugee students are educated has developed a support plan for students when entering the system, thus contributing to the quality of teaching and sustainable inclusion. The challenge for our education system is the fact that migrant and refugee children rarely have previous education documentation with them, and in most cases, it is impossible to have an insight into previously acquired education and achievement. Also, it is not possible to determine the grade in which a child should be enrolled only on the basis of age, although it is recommended to be in a peer group or to keep the age difference as small as possible. The ministry in charge of education is actively working on improving the competencies of teachers and professional associates for working with migrant and refugee children and students. Since the beginning of the migrant crisis, more than 2,500 teachers and professional associates have been trained.

Civil society organisations and international organisations dealing with the issue of protection of refugees and women have the access to the asylum centres (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, UN Women). Also, in the asylum centres all persons are provided with psycho-social assistance, and they also have access to information and organisations which are directly involved in the activities to combat violence. In the course of previous two year international and civil society organisations carried out a number of training sessions which at certain segments covered the topic of international protection standards in treating women who are victims of domestic violence among the migration population, also, certain CSOs ensured accommodation and psychological assistance to identified potential victims of gender-based violence.

6. Strategic Objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The activities of support for the gradual introduction of Gender Responsive Budgeting which consists of training and mentoring with the budget beneficiaries were continued only slowed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

Due to the epidemiological situation, the training continued via the Microsoft Teams application. Guidelines for the application of the gender equality test have been developed With the adoption of the Law on Planning System and the accompanying Decree on the methodology of public policy management, analysis of the effects of public policies and regulations and the content of individual public policy documents, the obligation to test gender equality analysis of the effects of regulations on gender equality was introduced. In order to establish the capacity of state administration bodies to prepare an analysis of the effects of regulations on gender equality, the Republic Secretariat for Public Policies organises training for contact persons for gender equality in state administration bodies. The training ss held with the support of the project of German-Serbian development co-operation “Support to Public Administration Reform in Serbia”, which is implemented by the German Organisation for International Co-operation - GIZ.

The goal of the gender equality test is to include the perception, experience, knowledge and interests of both women and men in the process and in laws and regulations. The structure of the test consists of: Sources of information; Consultations; Impacts and Compliance with Gender Equality Obligations. The effect analysis i.e. gender impact assessment, aims to see whether the regulation will affect women and men differently in order to neutralise discriminatory effects and promote gender equality.

The application of the gender equality test and the analysis of the effects related to gender equality will be mandatory for drafts and proposals of laws and regulations. The test will be filled in by the proposers and the analysis of the completed tests will be done by the Secretariat for Public Policies.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Nothing new.

This 2020 year is overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This, so far greatest health crisis, which also caused social and economic crisis of the world-wide proportions, has revealed the weakest links of the civilisation and in its unique way brought about endangerment of human rights of all vulnerable social groups.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Institute for Labour and Family Research is implementing various activities in the field of combating sexual harassment and its prevention. Among others, the Institute developed a study **“Tools for Prevention of Sexual Harassment as a Form of Gender Discrimination in Slovakia”**. It is a pilot case study inquiry among the national experts from official authorities, academic field and NGOs working within the field of gender discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual violence. The objective of this study was to collect data on a variety of topics via the method of cognitive interviewing. Its aim is to create a knowledge base for preparing policies aimed at sexual harassment prevention and elimination at work, school, and other environments in Slovakia. The report is available [here](#).

Research on **“The Quality of Relationships and Experience with Harassing Behaviour at Slovak Universities”**, has continued to be implemented. This nation-wide research represents a quantitative and a qualitative inquiry into the experiences of persons currently pursuing a full-time higher education degree at Slovak colleges and universities. The objective of this inquiry is to gather quantitative and qualitative data in two particular areas:

- 1) the experiences of the students with harassment and violent behaviour from their educators and from other students, and
- 2) the attitudes and values of the students with regards to gender discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual violence.

All college and university faculties (over 100) were contacted with an offer to take part in the research. The research question was defined relatively broad, according to the definition of sexual harassment introduced by the Antidiscrimination Act (365/2004). Quantitative data has been successfully collected and currently, the final phases of data analysis are underway. The results and reports are expected to be published by the end of 2020.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Full translation of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation **Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism**, including the action page and subtitles to the video on the action page, is being finalised and expected to be published during the *16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence 2020*.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The prepared amendment to **Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on Victims of Crime and on Amendments to Certain Acts (hereinafter referred to as the “Victims' Act”)** aims to strengthen the rights of victims and protect them from further victimisation by amending current legislation in the following areas:

1. Legal aid – extensions in civil proceedings

According to the valid regulation, legal assistance to victims is provided in criminal proceedings and in civil proceedings in the recovery of a claim for damages. In practice, however, it has been shown that victims need legal assistance in other civil proceedings in order to comprehensively address the life situation caused by a crime. These are, in particular, proceedings concerning applications for court urgent action to protect the victim from further contact and victimisation by the offender/perpetrator.

2. Compensation - widening the circle of eligible claimants (victims) and simplifying access

For the purpose of providing compensation, the proposed legislation extends the circle of eligible claimants (victims of violent crime) to surviving relatives who lived with the deceased at the time of death in the same household if the violent crime caused death and to the victim of the crime of torture of a close and entrusted person, criminal act of involuntary disappearance causing non-pecuniary damage.

In order to facilitate victims' access to compensation and to minimise the risk of victimisation caused by compensation proceedings from the offender, victims will be able to claim compensation from the state after the prosecution has been initiated (and not after the lawful proceedings have been lawfully ended). The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic will then assess whether the results of the investigation or the abbreviated investigation do not raise reasonable doubts that the victim of the violent crime was injured as a result of the violent crime, and will decide on awarding/not awarding compensation. After the victim has been compensated, the right to compensation against the offender passes to the state, which will recover it from the offender.

The amount of compensation for survivors of the victims in the event that the victim has died as a result of a violent crime is determined by a fixed amount equal to each survivor (25 times the minimum wage). The proposed regulation equalises all surviving victims, but at the same time allows compensation to be awarded in the amount of 50 times the minimum wage of a single surviving victim if he was dependent on the maintenance of the deceased.

3. Intervention centres - co-ordinated technical assistance for victims of domestic violence

To ensure the access of victims of domestic violence to specialised and professional assistance guaranteed by the Victims Act, it is proposed to create so-called *intervention centres*. This model is based on the co-ordination of activities and connecting police intervention with crisis intervention and specialised professional assistance provided to the victim or person at risk of domestic violence immediately after the occurrence of domestic violence. The purpose of the co-ordinated approach is to ensure comprehensive protection of the victim, to prevent further domestic violence and to enable the exercise of the victim's rights, such as the right to professional assistance and the right to protection against victimisation.

The interconnection of police and crisis intervention is based on the exchange of information, where the police inform the intervention centre within 24 hours of the report, and then proactively contacts the victim of domestic violence within 72 hours and offer her crisis intervention services.

The tasks of the intervention centre include assessing the threat to life or health and proposing a security plan. This evaluation evaluates the effectiveness of reporting and allows for the determination of further action, for example, transfer of the victim from the common dwelling, submission of a motion for urgent action. Professionally qualified persons (in the fields of psychology, social work and law) working in the intervention centre provide professional assistance, accompanying the victim in criminal proceedings as well as their legal representation. At the same time, the intervention centre helps the victim to contact other institutions and resolve the personal situation also through psycho-social support and counselling. The decision to use or not to use these services is left entirely to the victim.

4. Funding of victim support bodies - long-term

The current form of financing of accredited bodies allows the provision of a subsidy of up to 50,000€ within one year. This model is unsatisfactory in the long run, as it creates an environment of uncertainty and does not allow the support and provision of professional assistance, increasing its quality, availability and accessibility. In view of the above, it is proposed to adjust the financing and introducing a possibility of securing the finances through contracts concluded for a longer period, for

example, three years. This measure will enable the creation of a network of entities providing technical assistance, ensure the provision of technical assistance on a long-term and accessible basis, as well as create space for increasing its quality.

The prepared amendment to Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on Victims of Crime and on Amendments to Certain Acts is set to enter into force by mid-2021.

The position on ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Slovak Republic remains negative.

In 2020, the Slovak Republic has initiated the process of its seventh periodic review under the CEDAW committee.

2.2 Policy changes

In 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Family paid great attention to the preparation of an evaluation report on the implementation of the National Gender Equality Strategy for 2014-2019, its action plan for 2014-2019 and the National Action Plan for the prevention and elimination of violence against women 2014-2019. These reports on the implementation of the strategic national documents provide detailed information on specific activities and results in the field of increasing equality between women and men and equal opportunities and preventing and eliminating violence against women. The participatory process of creating a new national strategic document for the area of increasing equality between women and men and equal opportunities and prevention and elimination of violence against women in 2021-2025 is currently underway with the participation of experts from government institutions as well as experts from the non-governmental sector.

2.3 Institutional changes

A co-ordinating body to deal with violence against women and domestic violence has already been established in previous reporting cycles.

Continuous implementation of the **National project: Prevention and elimination of gender discrimination**. The Institute for Labour and Family Research as the recipient of the project aims to strengthen the system of counselling in the area of gender-based discrimination, including the area of gender-based violence. As a part of the process, the Institute itself has strengthened its expert capacities in the field of elimination of gender-based discrimination.

Activity 1: "Support of mechanisms focused on the elimination of gender discrimination"

The spectrum of activities is diverse: research (sexual harassment in universities) drafting and introducing methodologies (discrimination detection, etc.), educational activities and awareness-raising (Equal payday), counselling, and a campaign to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in Slovakia.

Activity 2: "Supporting the development of services and measures for victims of violence, in particular for women" in the framework of which the operations of co-ordinating-Methodological Centre for the Prevention of Violence against Women as well as the national helpline for the victims of gender-based violence is secured for upcoming two years. The issue to secure the long-term sustainability of the co-ordinating-Methodological Centre for the Prevention of Violence against Women remains yet to be resolved.

During the first wave of confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the co-ordinating-Methodological Centre for the Prevention of Violence against Women, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the Office of the President of the Slovak Republic held a number of working group meetings. Based on those, an appeal arose for the need to establish quarantine sites and testing for COVID-19 for women and their children at risk of experiencing violence who may be in need to be relocated to emergency housing facilities. The inputs and proposals were included in Government Decree No. 220/2020.

The most substantial adaptations concerning emergency housing equipment and advisory services for persons at risk of another person's behaviour are:

- (1) providers of social and emergency services were included among general mobilisation entities. On this basis, they were entitled to sanitary and hygienic support from the state material reserves;
- (2) the chairpersons of the self-governing regions have been imposed an obligation to set up quarantine sites for the provision of social services, including for women and children experiencing violence.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

During the first wave of confinements due to COVID-19, The co-ordinating-Methodological Centre for the Prevention of Violence against Women in co-operation with the co-ordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Slovak Republic prepared a campaign highlighting the increasing problem of domestic violence against children and women during the confinement period. Food and drugstore chains were asked to publish posters containing information on the basic contacts of help for victims and those who witness the violence and/or are trying to help the victims. The posters also contain a warning about the obligation to report violence against children and their neglect, and the need to call the Police in the event of an attack on an adult victim of domestic violence.

During the *16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence 2019*, Madame President Zuzana Caputova publicly supported the initiative which was positively received with significant support by the professional as well as the general public.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

From 30 March to 14 June 2020, the first wave, the co-ordinating-Methodological Centre for the Prevention of Violence against Women (KMC) of the Institute for Work and Family Research (IVPR) conducted weekly surveys of service providers for women experiencing violence to find out how many clients were seeking their services and how many of them needed emergency accommodation and shelter services. The number of organisations involved in the survey varied from week to week, ranging from 15 to 22 service providers located throughout Slovakia. A total of 1,251 women turned to services in the period under review, 362 of whom were new clients, that is, women who had not previously used their services. After an initial reduction in the use of services by women experiencing violence at the beginning of the confinement, there was an increase after the Easter holidays, which, with the exception of one week, continued until June. While in the first week of April one organisation was contacted by an average of three women, at the beginning of June it was by nine women.

In addition, the increase in partner violence against women during the confinement period has been confirmed. The stated numbers of women are significantly higher than they were in the same period last year. The National Helpline for Women Experiencing Violence reports up to twice the number of women who call the helpline for the first time. Additionally, to the free non-stop National Helpline for Women Experiencing Violence 0800 212 212, written e-mail communication was launched to enable women facing violence to communicate in writing.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Please see 2.1

3.3 Institutional changes

From October 2019 the Institute for Labour and Family Research offers on-line counselling including legal counselling and provides informational materials on how to fight, eliminate and prevent sexual

harassment and gender-based discrimination at work, school and other environments through counselling portal publicly available at its website www.totojerovnost.sk

3.4 Research and awareness raising

The Ministry of Interior Affairs continues with the implementation of the national project **Improving access to services for victims of crime and establishing contact points for victims**

The project creates conditions for the implementation of the preventive policy of the Slovak Republic as an integral part of the security policy of the Slovak Republic, which aims to achieve crime control through the co-ordination of a complementary set of repressive and non-repressive means. It highlights the need for a comprehensive and co-ordinated solution of crime prevention tasks by state and local authorities linked to NGOs, educational and scientific institutions. A comprehensive and co-ordinated solution of crime prevention tasks in the area of support and assistance to victims is a prerequisite for the creation and provision of accessible services in publicly accessible and known places in the form of stable contact points. The contact points will not only be a point of consultation and information but will also be a networking and co-ordination facility for assistance systems and institutions (self-government, educational institutions, social service providers, employment service providers, health care providers and others).

The project is implemented through the main project activities:

1. Building a special Needs Analysis and Victim Support Centre - the analytical centre will aim to create conceptual and analytical materials for further use by regional co-ordinators, their assistants and methodologists. At the same time, the Analysis Centre will monitor achievements and progress.
2. Establishing a network of co-ordinators for crime victims - ensuring a more effective impact of crime victims on the services provided under the project. During the first year, the network of co-ordinators and their assistants will be set up, and this will be continuously modelled on the basis of real needs.
3. Creation of a system of methodical management and co-ordination of individual contact points (CB), creation and approval of standards and methodologies from individual areas with a focus on the client's needs - providing a platform for co-ordinators and their assistants for further development, exchange of information and procedures.
4. Setting up co-operation by involving all stakeholders, including civil society, which will follow the methodologies developed. Within the activity, existing organisations and state administration bodies dealing with the issue will complement the system of providing assistance. The aim is to achieve maximum efficiency in this area to create a certain level of provided services.
5. Training of district co-ordinators, assistants and officers - ensuring the development of human resources in order to provide affordable, adequate and quality services to clients.
6. Creation of a database of contact points supporting within the NP and their results, evaluation of achieved results - the aim of the activity is to map individual contact points (a network of co-ordinators and their assistants) as well as their results and outputs. Part of the database system will serve public administration professionals and project team members to share examples of good practice, materials for lecture and preventive activities, experience, and the other part of the database accessible via a website, provide contact point data (contacts, services, assisting organisations).
7. Preventive activities with selected groups of victims - carried out in co-operation with NGOs dedicated to awareness-raising and prevention projects, while having relevant experience in innovative and modern communication projects on social issues.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.5 Other pertinent developments

In March 2020, the new national parliament has been elected and a new government has been formed. 32 of 150 MPs of the current parliament are women (21.3%). 3 of 16 members of the Cabinet are women (18.75%).

In 2020, the 100th anniversary of universal suffrage for all citizens of the Czechoslovak Republic in Slovakia is celebrated. With the enactment of universal suffrage in 1920, the Czechoslovak Republic strongly advocated for and supported the promotion of the basic pillars of democratic societies, namely free elections with the right to vote for all citizens of its country. In connection with the celebrations of this round anniversary, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Slovak Republic organised a public event with the participation of experts who discussed topics such as: what preceded the adoption of universal suffrage in the Czechoslovak Republic, what impact it had on the lives of women and society as a whole, but also what legacy this important event has for us today.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.5 Other pertinent developments

In 2020, the Slovak Republic adopted its first National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for the years 2021-2025. UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is one of the most important in the field of peace enforcement and international security policy. The international community's efforts to develop this agenda for the elimination of violence against women during armed conflict are based on the idea of the inextricable continuity of the principle of equality between women and men in the creation and maintenance of peace and security in the world. The purpose of this strategic document is to create the conditions for a comprehensive national policy aimed at guaranteeing the rights and reflecting the specific needs of women and girls in the field of peace and security, as well as setting the framework for effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 at national and international level. These goals are in line with the main principles of promoting the foreign policy of the Slovak Republic resulting from the Government's Programme Statement in compliance with international law and supporting the development of effective multilateralism with a key role for the UN.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Gender mainstreaming reviews and revisions of all new and/or newly amended laws and policies are continuously conducted mainly by the Department of Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities of the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice, or others.

6.2 Policy changes

In 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Family paid great attention to the preparation of an evaluation report on the implementation of the National Gender Equality Strategy for 2014-2019, its action plan for 2014-2019 and the National Action Plan for the prevention and elimination of violence against women 2014-2019. These reports on the implementation of the strategic national documents provide detailed information on specific activities and results in the field of increasing equality between women and men and equal opportunities and preventing and eliminating violence against women. The participatory process of creating a new national strategic document for the area of increasing equality between women and men and equal opportunities and prevention and

elimination of violence against women in 2021-2025 is currently underway with the participation of experts from government institutions as well as experts from the non-governmental sector.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2020, a new national project *Gender equality in the workplace* has been launched. The goal is to raise awareness among employers and employees as well as the general public about the advantages of supporting and mainstreaming gender equality into the workplace. Simultaneously, supporting materials on concrete measures and ways are planned to be drafted and disseminated. Special focus is on the reconciliation of work and family life via implementing diverse measures to support better work-life balance for the employees. Additionally, the project will introduce gender audits as a tool to better analyse the existing situation and help the employers on their path to a more gender-equal workplace.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

The Statistical Office of the Slovak republic produces an annual statistical report on gender indicators and data sets. A comprehensive overview of statistical information characterising the status of women and men in contemporary society. It includes data divided by gender in the field such as demography, labour market, social statistics, and health, education, science and technology, criminality, violence and judicature, public life and decision-making. The content is supplemented with international comparisons and graphic annexes. Methodological notes are included. The bilingual report in Slovak and English language for 2019 is available [here](#).

Since 2010, MLSAF produces an annual report about the state of play of gender equality in Slovakia. The report contains the latest development on the field of gender equality, main activities and actions of public institutions and NGOs as well as a set of gender equality indicators. In an analytical part, the report focuses on a particular area providing gender analysis and a set of good practice examples. The latest report 2019 does not provide any thematic analytical part. Previous reports were focusing on the labour market (2018), violence against women (2017), gender pay gap (2016), etc. The reports are available on the web page www.gender.gov.sk.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

In 2020, there were several legislative proposals tabled with the aim of amending the current law on termination of pregnancy. These proposals were also noted by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights who addressed a letter to the Slovak Parliament to express concerns about a draft law then under discussion in the National Council of the Slovak Republic which, in her view, would introduce restrictions on access to safe and legal abortion services. None of the proposals were adopted. The latest proposal was defeated by a 59-58 margin in October 2020.

In 2020, an issue with insufficient sustainable funding of safe women housing (shelter services) and support services has arisen. Due to significant delays with opening call financed via the EEA Grants and Norway Grants there has currently a period when several NGOs providing safe women housing (shelter services) and support services are unable to secure sufficient funding to continue their operations. The systematic problem of this financing scheme is the fact, that most of the project funding is secured through either the EU funds or the EEA or Norway grants. It is essential for funding call to be open in a precisely timely manner, otherwise, an empty window opens during which the service providers are unable to secure sufficient funding. As a possible solution, a new working group on systematic and sustainable funding for safe women housing (shelter services) and support services is being created under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

The year 2020 has been greatly influenced by coping with the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to mitigate its negative impact. It has been proven by a number of research that the pandemic and various anti-pandemic measures, such as confinement, self-isolation obligations, limiting opening hours for many businesses and services have had a negative impact on overall gender equality. An

increase of Violence against women and domestic violence has been recorded by the National Helpline for Women experiencing violence as well as the General Prosecutors Office of the Slovak Republic. The National Helpline for Women Experiencing Violence reports up to twice the number of women who call the helpline for the first time compared to the last year. According to the General Prosecutors Office of the Slovak Republic, during the first nine months of the year 2020, the number of domestic violence cases increased by 36% compared to the same period last year. Also, in the first nine months of this year, the GPO of the Slovak Republic recorded an increase in criminal prosecution in relation to child pornography by almost 90%. At the same time, the number of identified perpetrators also increased by 45%.

8. Additional comments, if any

A significant trend of increasing the participation of men in the upbringing of children has been confirmed in the recent period, as evidenced by the number of fathers on maternity* (paternity) and parental leave.

While in 2009 only 78 men decided to take maternity (paternity) leave, in 2019, there were almost 17,000. Our legislation has allowed fathers to draw maternity (paternity) leave for up to 28 weeks before the child is 3 years of age with an allowance level which roughly equals to their net monthly income. The condition is that the mother does not use it for the same child at the same time. Parents can take turns with the child. More and more fathers are also going on parental leave, although their number is lower than those on maternity (paternity) leave. During parental leave, parents can agree on who will take it. While in 2009 there were less than 4,000 men on parental leave, in 2019 it was just over 7,000. Interim data from 2020 suggest that this growing trend of fathers' active participation in the upbringing of young children will be maintained in 2020 as well.

**the Slovak legislation only recognises the term "maternity leave" even when referring to fathers/men on the leave.*

In June 2020, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family adopted an amendment to its organisational charter which *inter alia* resulted in a re-structuring of a number of its sections, departments and units. New Section for Family Policies has been established by separation from the Section of Social and Family Policies. The Department of Gender Equality and Equal opportunities has been transferred under the new Section of Family Policies. The Department of Gender Equality and Equal opportunities has been renamed to the Department of Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities. Its "Equal treatment and Non-discrimination unit" has been dissolved. Currently, the department employs five core employees including its new director.

SLOVENIA

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act

Amended legislation ensures higher level of social protection for parents who work part-time due to childcare. One parent is allowed to work part-time if she/he cares for the child until the age of three (or in case of two children until the completion of the first grade of primary school of the youngest child) and is also entitled to a salary according to the actual employment agreement. Before the adoption of the amendment, the state covered the payment of social security contributions from the proportional part of the minimum wage. With the amendment, the state covers the payment of social security contributions from her/his actual wage. Parents that work part-time due to childcare are now receiving social security contributions in equal amount as if they are working full time.

Pension and Disability Insurance Act

Amended legislation regulates accrual rate for pension that will become equal for women and men with full pension qualifying period (63.5%) in 2025.

A novelty regarding the accrual rate for pension is also the possibility of recognising a higher accrual percentage or reduced age limit to one of the parents (in general, this will be claimed by a mother). The higher accrual rate for one child is 1.36%, with a maximum of 4.08% in total. If the certain conditions are met, the age limit can be then reduced for 6 months for one child, 16 months for two children, 26 months for three children, 36 months for four children and 48 months for five children or more.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Project Action Dad

Leading partner MLFSA – Family Affairs Directorate and a project partner the Peace Institute have been implementing the project Action Dad with an aim to contribute to the awareness raising of (prospective) parents, employers, the professional and general public about the importance of actively involving men in paternity and a more equal distribution of parental childcare from birth on. Duration of the project is 24 months (from 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2022) and will be implemented at several levels: between (prospective) parents, between employers, between workers in the fields of health, midwifery and social work, and the general public.

The overall goal of the project is the reduction of the deep-rooted inequalities that still persist between women and men in relation to paid/unpaid work, the uptake of family related leaves and to enable people with caring responsibilities to better balance their work with family commitments. Achieving that, project approaches the topic on three levels, corresponding with objectives on different levels: macro, mezzo and micro level.

Objectives referring to the state (macro level):

- To ensure successful implementation of the Work – Life Balance Directive, especially in terms of providing appropriate legal and policy measures for more balanced uptake of family-related leave between men and women.
- To simplify the exercises of parental rights and take positive measures that enable and assist future fathers to enjoy their share of parental leave.

On the macro, state level, the project is oriented towards providing expert basis for detecting the needs of working parents, taking the most appropriate measures for work-life balance, as well as to

train and encourage social partners and health-care experts (implementing the workshops for future parents, such as maternity hospitals, local health centres), and to institutions providing information on sharing the child-related leave (centres for social work) to promote an active fatherhood and more gender balanced take-up of parental leave.

Objectives referring to employers (mezzo level):

- To encourage employers to adopt internal policies and practises for gender neutral approach to work-life balance and to recognise positive effects of active fatherhood from birth of the child on for their employed fathers.

On the mezzo, organisational level, project brings to the force the aspect and the role of employers in work-life balance policymaking and emphasises interlacing of present policy and business planning. The role of employers within the project is important in regard to their contribution to raising awareness about the issue of work-life balance for all employees (parents, carers).

Objectives referring to the individual men and women (micro level):

- To address and to reduce gender stereotypes in the area of work-life balance and to promote more equal sharing of childcare responsibilities.

On the micro level, the project is oriented to awareness-raising activities to encourage men in greater childcare involvement, to focus on the positive aspects of fathers' involvement in childcare from their earliest age and to tackle gender-based stereotypes in the field of childcare.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

Adoption of the Protocol for preventing and taking action on cases of sexual and gender-based violence against migrants and asylum seekers

The protocol was signed by several stakeholders in order to ensure a co-ordinated approach in preventing gender-based violence against migrants and asylum-seekers and to offer protection and support to victims of such violence.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Cyber VAW – Cyber Violence and Harassment against Women and Girls (Click-off project)

During the project Click-off (co-financed by the EU) awareness-raising activities concentrated on informing about gender stereotypes and sexism online as well as changing attitudes towards prevention and elimination of cyber violence against women and girls. The campaign took place from September 2018 to November 2019. Its main outputs are TV spots, with actors from Slovenian teen movie Gajin svet, raising-awareness on the existence of cyber violence against women and girls and video clips presenting four most common forms of cyber violence against women and girls. The latter is first illustrated in the work, and in the graphic part, in which statistical data for each form of violence is included, and in addition to that users are invited to download the Mobile app Click-off. Promotional spots have been posted on the YouTube channel Gender Equality and projects' webpage <http://odklikni.enakostspolov.si/promocijski-spoti/>.

In November 2019, during the 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women, the final conference #Click-Off Cyber Violence Against Women and Girls was organised where among others two famous activists and advocates for women's rights Thordis Elva Thorvaldsdottir and Emma Holten share their personal experiences and views. The main conclusions of the conference were:

- In order to make a better cyber climate, we should work with the motto: Don't be a bystander, be an upstander!
- One of crucial ways in which to achieve positive change is to see abuse for what it is, the responsibility of the perpetrator. Instead of telling women and girls to go offline if they don't

want to be abused, we need to refocus our efforts and tell perpetrators to stop abusing them, and what kind of behaviour constitutes cyber violence.

- Along with the other projects and activities, accompanied with political will and funding - is how we move towards clicking off cyber violence.

Dissemination of educational and promotional resources through relevant channels:

- *Handbook for professionals working with children* was printed in 5000 copies (A4, 52 pages) and sent in packages of six copies to 769 addresses (all primary and secondary schools in Slovenia, all Social Work Centres in Slovenia, all student halls of residence in Slovenia and relevant NGOs working with children and women). Also a .pdf electronic version is available on the project's webpage: <http://odklikni.enakostspolov.si/o-projektu/> and disseminated through partners' communication channels.

- *A Handbook with Guidelines for Police and Justice* was printed in 1000 copies (A5, 52 pages) and sent in packages of 5 copies to 171 addresses (all police stations across Slovenia, all police directorates across Slovenia, General Police directorate, all district state prosecutors offices across Slovenia, specialised state prosecutors office and the office of the state prosecutor general, all local courts in Slovenia, all district courts in Slovenia, all labour courts in Slovenia, all higher courts in Slovenia, labour and social court, higher labour and social court, administrative court and supreme court). Also electronic version as pdf is available at project's webpage: <http://odklikni.enakostspolov.si/o-projektu/> and disseminated through partners' communication channels.

- *Trainers kit for professionals working with youth* in electronic version as pdf is available at project's webpage: <http://odklikni.enakostspolov.si/o-projektu/> and disseminated through partners' communication channels.

A "**Handbook on forced marriages in Roma communities**" was prepared, where all relevant stakeholders were included in its preparation. The aim of the handbook is to raise awareness on the issue among civil servants and other stakeholders working with Roma community.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Slovenia has adopted different measures for preventing and combating domestic violence during the lockdown in spring due to **COVID- 19**:

- 24/7 telephone helpline was set up to provide advice and help to victims and other callers.
- Pharmacies have been sharing contact information of relevant NGOs working in the area of domestic violence and violence against women.
- Capacity of several helplines has been strengthened and their availability prolonged (relationship counselling, therapeutic counselling, counselling for youth, counselling for female prisoners and employees, etc.)
- Safe houses have been provided with personal protective equipment.
- Reallocation of existing users of safe houses from one to another in order to prepare space for new victims whose health status has not been determined yet and to avoid spread of the virus among healthy users.
- Check-in phone calls to perpetrators who are included in the programme.
- Training in social skills for perpetrators of violence has been implemented via phone, skype, email.
- Police and other stakeholders have been regularly trained by relevant experts to deal with cases of domestic violence. Police was instructed to handle each case in accordance with the safety protocols and guidelines that are effective during the exceptional circumstances. However, it was of the utmost importance for all to protect victims in the first place.
- Capacity of several helplines was strengthened and their availability prolonged (relationship counselling, therapeutic counselling, counselling for youth, counselling for female prisoners and employees, etc.).

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Support of the event Female Engineer of the Year 2019

The event aims to promote women engineers working in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (SaTEM). In Europe, there is a gender imbalance in these areas, with only some 25% of such studies being undertaken by women. One of the main reasons for underrepresentation of women in STEM is also a lack of role models and inadequate explanation of the role of engineers in societal development.

The project Female Engineer of the Year is dedicated to selection and promotion of female engineers in Slovenia and promotion of STEM jobs among girls in high schools and female student population. Highlight of the project is the final event with announcement of the yearly winner. Yearly winner is the role model to younger generations of girls. MLFSA has financially promoted the organisation of the final event, that was held in January 2020.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

Adoption of the Protocol for preventing and taking action on cases of sexual and gender-based violence against migrants and asylum seekers

The protocol was signed by several stakeholders in order to ensure a co-ordinated approach in preventing gender-based violence against migrants and asylum-seekers and to offer protection and support to victims of such violence.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Project My Work. My Pension

In 2020 MLFSA continues with the implementation of the **project My Work. My Pension**. The main objectives of the project are:

- developing effective strategies/policies/measure to reduce gender gap in pension;
- strengthening gender mainstreaming;
- developing awareness-raising tools; and
- data warehouse.

The partner organisation of the project is Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of Slovenia.

The project aims to empower future cohorts of pensioners, especially women, with the knowledge about the implications of different decision regarding employment and career choices throughout their life course.

The main activities, carried out in 2020, were:

- implementation of the **media campaign** that includes advertising of promotional spots and websites, social media, etc.,
- implementation of **analysis** of causes for the gender pension gap in Slovenia,
- implementation of the **qualitative analysis** (focus groups) of causes for the gender pension gap in Slovenia,
- preparation of the **information brochure** on pension system in Slovenia (with a focus on women),

- organisation of the **seminar on gender pension gap for relevant stakeholders**,
- organisation of the **workshop for policy makers**,
- exchange of good practices – **study visit** in Berlin, Germany,
- distribution of the **promotional materials** to the general public with the aim to stimulate interest for the main focus of the project (pay/pension gap, earnings and pension).

Results of the project are regularly updated at the following websites (in Slovene only): www.pokojnina.enakostspolov.si and www.mojedelo-mojapokojnina.si.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Challenges and lessons learned stayed the same as last year (see below).

1. Progress on gender equality still too slow

Although significant progress has been made in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women in many areas, particularly in legislation, barriers to substantive gender equality still exist. The changing of social and cultural patterns is a long-term process, and actual gender equality cannot be achieved through short-term measures.

Persistent gender differences require the continuous elimination of barriers to the full participation of women in the labour market and in political, public and economic/financial decision making. It is also important to combat deeply rooted and newly emerging gender stereotypes that determine women's and men's roles in society and create a gender imbalance in paid and unpaid work. Therefore, we will continue to focus our efforts on creating conditions for a more balanced division of family obligations between women and men.

The existing systemic regulation of equality between women and men still does not ensure actual gender equality in bodies governed by public law. Despite the declared equality between women and men, the figures show that we have not yet achieved a balanced gender representation in specific areas of social life, particularly in decision-making positions in politics, the economy and bodies governed by public law; therefore, in 2019 amendments to the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act are being drafted. One of the important challenges that remains is also gender balance in economic decision-making, since there are only few women CEOs in the biggest Slovenian companies. To this end, Slovenia is planning to propose legal measures in this area.

2. Backlash against gender equality

One of the challenges gender equality policy will have to deal with in the future is to make its achievements more visible and recognised as a democratic norm. It has been noticed that, irrespective of the development of human rights and standards, gender equality advocates and their initiatives to further improve the status of women and men in our society often encounter negative attitudes. Radical movements (that are trying to re-establish society without dated views on gender equality, human rights and equalities in general) are very successful at promoting the so-called gender theory conspiracy and attacking women's rights, advocates and activists.

3. Limited resources and political commitment

Another challenge that the Equal Opportunities Department in Slovenia is facing, is firstly general lack of financial and human resources for gender equality which could have a negative impact on the realisation of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the future; and secondly additional tasks related to other inequalities and discrimination (e.g. LGBTIQ+, racial discrimination). Challenges which always remains for the area of gender equality is a political commitment to and lack of understanding of the issue.

Additional tasks related to other inequalities and discrimination (e.g. LGBTIQ+) have been conferred to the main national gender equality mechanism in Slovenia. As a consequence, lack of financial and human resources for gender equality could have a negative impact on the realisation of gender equality agenda and the empowerment of women and girls in the future. Challenges which always remains for the area of gender equality is a political commitment to the agenda.

For more efficient implementation of gender equality policy and in order to ensure greater autonomy and more efficient functioning of the national mechanism for gender equality, the competent authority should be strengthened and given a position of influence in the government's hierarchy and/or its organisational structure To ensure that the principle of gender equality is followed by all ministries and state institutions, the status of co-ordinators within the ministries should be strengthen and gender budgeting should be applied at different levels.

8. Additional comments, if any

We would be happy to share experiences and results of our EU project on cyber against women and girls - Click-off.

SPAIN

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Two Royal Decrees on equality plans and equal remuneration have been recently published. They implement Royal Decree-Law 6/2019 of 1 March on urgent measures to guarantee **equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in employment and occupation** (<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2019/03/07/pdfs/BOE-A-2019-3244.pdf>), mentioned in the last report. These Royal Decrees are the following:

- **Royal Decree 901/2020, of October 13, regulating equality plans** for companies with 50 or more employees and their compulsory registration in a specific Registry (*also amending Royal Decree 713/2010, of May 28, on registration and deposit of collective labour agreements*). It also includes the scope of gender equality plans, the negotiation procedure, its content and the necessary monitoring and evaluation measures.
- **Royal Decree 902/2020, of October 13, on equal remuneration between women and men**, regulating the obligation of equal remuneration for work of equal value and the principle and instruments of pay transparency, including the obligation for all companies to have remuneration records and, for those obliged to develop an equality plan, to also carry out a remuneration audit. It also introduces job evaluation systems and the right of workers to be informed.

1.2 Policy changes

Concerning employment, and as an update of our report of last year, the final report and summary report of the **pilot project of blind curriculum vitae** has been published and disseminated. The project compared data from 46 companies of different sizes, 240 selection processes of 67 different types of jobs, managing a total of 87,178 applications, and finally hiring a total of 749 men and 932 women.

During this reporting period, awareness-raising workshops have been carried out with companies on how to address **unconscious gender biases** in management and recruitment processes.

A new open call of the **Business Equality Label** was launched in October 2020.

The Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities (IWEQ) is **reinforcing its free advisory service to small and medium enterprises** on the design and implementation of **gender equality measures and plans** in order to be able to better give response to the emerging needs of support due to recent regulations on gender equality plans and gender pay transparency (mentioned in section 1.1).

The IWEQ has also been working, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy and with social partners, in the development of a model of pay registry for companies to support pay transparency.

The IWEQ has continued **promoting a more equal participation of women and men in decision-making positions** with different initiatives such as “More Women, Better Companies”, supporting focused female professional development projects; awareness-raising activities about the need for a more equal participation of women and men in decision-making positions at all levels and in all sectors of society, through the LinkedIn and twitter profiles of “Mujeres, Talento y Liderazgo” (**Women, talent and leadership network**). (See additional information in Objective 4).

As regards the **STEM sector**, as was mentioned in the last report, two programmes are being implemented to reduce horizontal segregation and encourage the participation of girls and young people, “I want to be an engineer” in collaboration with Polytechnic public universities and “Now

you”, with leading companies. In addition, different programmes are carried out to promote women in the areas of science, information technology and entrepreneurship, such as INNOVATIA 8.3, aiming to mainstream the gender perspective in knowledge transfer processes, and in the promotion of female technology-based companies from universities. It also develops entrepreneurial-oriented training actions and incorporates the gender perspective in business counselling. During the referred period, 48 public and private universities in Spain have joined the programme and the Innovatia Network.

In the **Justice sector**, the II Plan for Equality in the Judicial Career was approved by agreement of the Plenary of the Spanish Council of the Judiciary on 30 January 2020. It contains a complete collection and comparative analysis of data relating to the application of the principle of equality between women and men within the judiciary and its evolution over the period 2013-2019, including data on access to the judicial career and to the different specialisations existing within it; promotion within the judicial career and presence of women in the different judicial bodies, in particular in the positions of maximum responsibility in the judiciary; initial and continuous training in the field of equality for persons who are part of the judicial career; use of the measures of family co-responsibility and reconciliation of personal, family and professional life foreseen by the specific regulations; specific issues of health and safety at work; participation of women in judicial activities of an international nature, salaries, etc. The complete document can be consulted at the following link:

<http://www.poderjudicial.es/cgpj/es/Temas/Igualdad-de-Genero/La-igualdad-de-genero-en-la-carrera-judicial/>

1.3 Institutional changes

A new **Ministry of Equality** was created by Royal Decree 2/2020, of 12 January, which includes a State Secretariat for Equality and against Gender Violence of which depends the Government Delegation against gender-based violence, the Directorate General for Equal Treatment and Ethnic and Racial Diversity and the Directorate General on Sexual Diversity and LGBTI rights. The Institute of Women is ascribed to the Ministry of Equality. As in any ministry, it also includes an Under-Secretariat for Equality.

A new Royal Decree 938/2020, 27 October, regulating the “Observatory Women, Science and Innovation”, was recently enacted, repealing the previous one, to adapt, among other issues, to department changes and national and international strategies, legislation and actions regarding equality and non-discrimination between women and men, specifically in the Research, Development and Innovation sector. The Observatory is chaired by the Minister of Science and Innovation with representatives from ten Ministries, among them, the Ministry of Equality and also of other bodies, including the Institute of Women.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Institute of Women has published several studies such as: “Diagnosis of young women in Spain”; “Stereotypes, roles and gender relations in nationally produced television series: a sociological analysis”; and, “Advertising and Christmas toy campaigns: Promoting or breaking gender stereotypes?”

On the occasion of the International Day of the Girl, on 11 October, a report on “The sexualisation of girls in advertising” has been published. It analyses 140 complaints on campaigns from 59 advertisers received at the Observatory of Women Image (mentioned in the next section) between 2010 and 2020.

Specifically addressing STEM, IWEO has published different studies, such as “Women and digitalisation: from digital gaps to algorithms”; “Women in the Spanish digital economy: Inspiring careers” and “Our digital lives. Barometer of e-gender equality in Spain”, in collaboration with the National Observatory of Telecommunications and Information Society (ONTSI). Furthermore, a seminar was held on October on “COVID and Technology from a gender perspective”.

Aiming to reverse the unequal presence of women in the business cases used by Spanish Universities and Business Schools, IWEO has also published and distributed a manual on “*Business Management and Administration Cases with a Gender Perspective*” to address stereotypes in traditional leadership.

Furthermore, IWEO has also promoted and organised several webinars and workshops about the **impact of the COVID-19 pandemic** on gender equality policies and feminism (Menendez Pelayo University, 31 August-1 September; National Distance Education University, 21-25 September). Additionally, within the network of companies with a gender equality seal (DIE network”), a new study was published on “*Management and prevention of sexual harassment and harassment based on sex in the DIE network*” and different webinars and exchanges of best practices have taken place, such as *remote working and gender equality* or work-life balance policies after COVID-19, available at <https://www.igualdadempresa.es/DIE/jornadas/home.htm>

The Institute has also participated in the European project **Equality for Work Life Balance (EQ&WL)**, promoted by the Italian National public body responsible for Public Employment Policies (ANPAL) to support SMEs – and namely those in the social economy – in their process of raising awareness on the benefits of work-life balance friendly working environments.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The **Observatory of Women Image** of the Institute of Women receives and analyses complaints arising from sexist advertisements that appear in any media. On this basis, companies are required to modify or withdraw their campaigns, and the Spanish Women’s Institute advises them to facilitate the removal of discriminatory messages. From the first of October 2019 to the end of October 2020 included, the Observatory has received 582 complaints. During this period, it has carried out 31 requirements and sexist claims, 15 recommendations to improve the treatment of women’s image and 3 claims that have been forwarded to the competent body on account of its subject matter.

Concerning the **Recommendation of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating sexism**, the campaign materials developed by the Council of Europe: *Sexism: See it. Name it. Stop it.*, consisting on a video, an action page and a quiz, have been translated into Spanish and broadly disseminated. They are all available at the website of the Institute of Women. In addition, IWEO has collaborated in the webinars, one on sexism in the media and another one on sexism in the justice sector, organised by the Spanish branch of the European Women’s Lobby, the NGO which is developing the project “Take action against sexism” together with eight other countries of the Council of Europe.

The Virtual School of Equality (www.escolavirtualigualdad.es), developed by the Institute of Women, offers online gender equality training aimed at the population in general and professionals of different fields in several areas. Its current 10th Edition, ending in September 2021, offers **21,000 places**.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

- Royal Decree Law 12/2020 of 31 March on urgent measures for the protection and assistance of victims of gender violence. It includes declaring essential services all comprehensive assistance services for victims of violence against women in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Royal Decree-Law 11/2020, of 31 March, which adopts urgent complementary measures in the social and economic sphere to deal with COVID-19. It includes an aid programme for victims of gender violence within the framework of the State Housing Plan 2018-2021.

- Royal Decree-Law 20/2020 of 29 May, establishing the **Minimum Living Income** (See section 6.1) which is a **support instrument for victims of gender-based violence** as they can be exempted from meeting certain requirements to access the minimum living income.

2.2 Policy changes

- Further implementation of the **Spanish National Pact against Gender-based Violence**, approved in 2017 for the 2018-2022 period.
- **Contingency Plan against Gender Violence in the Face of the COVID-19 Crisis** that includes all measures developed and implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes a series of strategic and operational measures to prevent, control and minimise the possible negative consequences in the lives of many victims of gender-based violence resulting from the confinement measures. It includes declaring as essential services, all comprehensive assistance services for victims of violence against women. This means that the service operators must guarantee the normal functioning of the information devices 24h; emergency response and reception to victims at risk, including women who need to leave the home to guarantee their protection; the normal operation of emergency centres, shelters, supervised flats, and safe accommodation for victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking; and psychological, legal and social assistance to victims in person (by phone or through other channels). Implementation of a chat service through instant messaging via **WhatsApp for emotional or psychological support**.
- A '**Guide for action for women who are experiencing gender-based violence in a situation of stay-at-home derived from the state of alarm by COVID-19**', with questions and answers on general information; advice; psychological help; help in an emergency; and usual questions whether or not you live with the aggressor; at the same time, it also solves doubts about custody visits of possible sons and daughters in common. The guide explains that in situations of danger or emergency due to gender violence, there are no sanctions for going out to the street to ask for help or to seek police, judicial or other kind of help.
- Incorporation of a **new accreditation system for victims of trafficking, sexual exploitation or cases of extreme vulnerability in prostitution contexts**: For the first time, following the obligations of the Warsaw Convention Article 10, the identification of women for the purpose of accessing economic and social rights (housing, MVI, labour, etc.) may be done by specialised NGOs or specialised social services.
- Regarding the initiative **Companies for a society free of gender-based violence** that facilitates labour inclusion of women victims of gender-based violence, two more have joined this initiative during the referred period, amounting to 69 companies committed to the eradication of this type of violence.

Aware of the difficulties arising from COVID-19 for labour market inclusion, the initiative "*We are by your side, stopping gender violence together. Mentors for a society free of gender violence*" has been developed in collaboration with the Integra Foundation and the Spanish Red Cross. In 2020, 35 female managers from different companies participated in this initiative providing counselling and support for women victims of gender-based violence who are trying to re-join the labour market.

2.3 Institutional changes

In January 2020, the Ministry of Equality was set up, being the Government Delegation against gender-based violence (hereinafter GDGBV) included in this Ministry (See point 1.3).

In 2019 a new "Guide of the system of action and co-ordination in cases of gender-based violence" was published

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Awareness-raising campaigns

- In 2019, the GDGBV launched three new awareness-raising campaigns with the following hashtags:
 - o A **campaign against sexual violence**, with the hashtag [#RespetalímitesSíoSí](#) ([#RespectlimitsYesorYes](#))
 - o Campaign directed at the **general population**, with the hashtag [#NoEstoySola](#) ([#Iamnotalone](#))
 - o Campaign **aimed at adolescents**, with the hashtag [#PasiónNoEsPosesion](#) ([#Passionisnotposession](#))
- In 2020, the GDGBV launched an awareness-raising campaign in the of context of the COVID-19 crisis: ***“We are with you, we stop gender violence together”***:

In September 2020, the GDGBV has published the results of the [Macro-Survey on Violence against Women 2019](#):

The GDGBV has published the following [new studies](#):

- Female genital mutilation in Spain 2019.
- The judicial response to sexual violence suffered by boys and girls.
- Study on women victims of gender violence in the rural world.
- Study on minors and gender-based violence.
- Study on women over 65 who are victims of gender-based violence.
- Study on “Women, Disability and Gender Violence”.
- Study on “Sexual Violence on Women with Intellectual Disability”.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Forthcoming regulations and public policies aimed at making progress in the fight against all forms of gender violence:

1. Approval by the Council of Ministers on 3 March 2020 of the preliminary draft Organic Law on the Comprehensive Guarantee of **Sexual Freedom**, which will cover global measures for all forms of violence against women, as outlined in the Istanbul Convention.
2. Proposed Organic Law to amend the Criminal Code to eradicate the **forced or non-consensual sterilisation of legally incapacitated persons** with disabilities.
3. Draft Organic Law on the Comprehensive **Protection of Children and Adolescents from Violence** (currently being processed in the Congress of Deputies).
4. **National Strategy on Violence against Women 2021-2025**.
5. Proposals presented by the Ministry of Equality within the framework of the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Mechanism for new resources for the assistance and protection of victims of all forms of Gender-based Violence.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Royal Decree 463/2020, of 14 March, which declares the **state of alarm** for the management of the health crisis situation caused by **COVID-19** (extended by successive royal decrees until 21 June, according to the provisions of article 116 of the Spanish Constitution and of Organic Law 4/1981, of 1 June, on states of alarm, exception and siege), established the suspension of terms provided in the procedural laws for all jurisdictional orders. It also established that the calculation of the deadlines

would be resumed at the moment the state of alarm lost its validity (22 June 2020). However, in order **to ensure the protection of fundamental rights, the Royal Decree exempted the aforementioned suspension of the procedural periods** of certain judicial actions, such as:

- In the criminal jurisdictional order, suspension and interruption did not apply to habeas corpus procedures, to actions entrusted to guard services, to actions with a detainee, to **protection orders**, to urgent actions in matters of surveillance penitentiary and **any precautionary measure regarding violence against women or minors**. Likewise, during the investigation phase, the competent judge or court may agree to carry out those actions that, due to their urgent nature, could not be postponed.
- In relation to the rest of the jurisdictional orders, the interruption referred did not apply to the following cases: [...] the adoption of measures or **provisions for the protection of minors** provided for in Article 158 of the Civil Code.
- Nevertheless, the provisions of the previous sections, the judge or court may agree to the practice of any legal actions that are necessary to avoid irreparable damage to the rights and legitimate interests of the parties in the process.

Consequently, the procedures related to violence against women were not subject to any type of procedural suspension during the state of alarm decreed by the Government due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19 and, hence, the necessary protection measures were applied (including protection orders).

Besides this, it is worth highlighting the approval of Royal Decree-Law 16/2020, of 28 April, of procedural and organisational measures to deal with COVID-19 in the field of the Administration of Justice. This norm includes urgent measures in the fields of security in the work of judges, prosecutors and other professionals of the administration of justice; boost to the recovery of judicial activity; digital transformation, among others. It is intended to ensure a proper functioning of the courts and tribunals that has a positive effect on all those citizens who need access to justice, including **women who are victims of any kind of violence**.

Finally, it should be noted that, in the field of protection for minors, the General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ) established **criteria in relation to compliance with the visitation and custody regime**. The general rule established by the CGPJ was the maintenance of the measures taken judicially in family proceedings. However, it was understood that the exceptional situation created by the health alert and the need to preserve the health of children and parents could require adapting to the circumstances in each specific case and, consequently, modifying the suspension of said measures.

On the part of the **Public Prosecutor's Office**, an internal regime note was issued in order to interpret Royal Decree 463/2020, of 14 March, in relation to the execution of the visitation and custody regime judicially agreed upon. To promote the unity of action of the Public Prosecutor in cases of exercise of the visitation regime of the non-custodial parent agreed by a Court of Violence against women, a note of internal regime was sent on 22 March 2020 giving guidelines for action to all prosecutors. Likewise, both the Office of the Attorney General of the State and the Office of Violence against Women addressed all the delegated prosecutors, warning of the special vulnerability of women and children during the lockdown and the need to act with greater impulse and speed.

3.2 Policy changes

The approval of Organic Law 5/2018, on the reform of the Organic Law of the Judiciary meant the inclusion of measures aimed at deepening the **training on gender equality of judges and prosecutors**. The purpose of this norm was to increase judicial training in anti-discriminatory Law, including the gender perspective as a horizontal matter. As a result, selective tests for entry and promotion in the judicial and prosecutorial careers include the study of the principle of equality between women and men, including measures on violence against women, and its application across the board in the area of the judicial function. Thus, it contains a topic within the area of Constitutional Law specifically devoted to the international instruments against gender discrimination.

Once the selection process has been completed, the initial training contains specific modules on the application of the principle of equality between women and men and gender violence in all its manifestations, specific training on the CEDAW, on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

In addition, a specific seminar on detecting and overcoming gender stereotypes in the exercise of jurisdiction and another on prosecution with a gender perspective have been incorporated into the Teaching Plan of the 70th class of the Judicial Academy (academic year 2019-2020). Also, a specific seminar on gender violence in all its manifestations under the Istanbul Convention, which addresses the issue from a gender and human rights perspective; a simulation of statements by victims of domestic violence and victims of gender violence in any of its manifestations; a workshop on critical statements, also approached from a gender and human rights perspective and focused on avoiding secondary victimisation; a seminar on trafficking in human beings; a seminar on European standards of Article 6 of the ECHR; and a seminar on transsexuality.

The **Training Plan for 2020** of the Judicial School includes the following activities:

- Updated Supreme Court jurisprudence on gender violence and crimes against sexual freedom and sexual indemnity.
- Protection orders and precautionary measures in the procedure on gender violence. Use of electronic devices.
- Meeting between judges on violence against women.
- The investigation and prosecution of crimes against sexual freedom. Special reference to the minor victim.
- The incidence of gender in the social jurisdiction. Special reference to the community jurisprudence on equality and its application by the Spanish courts. EU perspective.
- The judicial protection of the rights of reconciliation of work and family life. Special reference to the problems derived from the reduction of the working day by legal guardianship and the specification of the working hours.
- The gender perspective in the Spanish, European and inter-American systems.
- Meeting of judges on violence against women with family judges.
- Advanced gender violence.
- Initiation in gender violence training.
- Application of the gender perspective in family law.
- The woman's body as an object of commerce.
- Legislative developments in the field of equality. Evolution of the right to equality and non-discrimination based on sex since the approval of the Spanish Constitution until today.
- Application of the right to equality and non-discrimination based on sex in international and European law. Jurisprudence of the ECHR and the European Court of Justice.
- Human trafficking.

In addition to these organised activities, there are **guides** on recommendations, good practices or criteria for judicial action, which seek to improve and homogenise the judicial response in matters that are considered strategic from the point of view of equality between women and men. Their aim is to improve the judicial response in specific matters, introducing the gender and human rights perspective.

Over the past few months, the **Spanish Supreme Court** has passed several judgments that **include a gender perspective**. Among others: “La Manada” case (ruling of 21 June 2019, where the Supreme Court considered that the proven facts carried out in the instance ruling determined that these cannot constitute a crime of sexual abuse, but rather a crime of rape); or ruling 99/2019, of 26 February 2019, where the Supreme Court analyses the premises of the gender-based aggravating circumstances.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

Grants under regulation of [Resolution of 22 June 2020, of the Secretary of State for Social Rights](#), for the development of activities of social general interest charged to the tax allocation of the Income Tax of Physical Persons, contribute to entities that provide free advice to women to achieve the effectiveness of the measures agreed in the divorce judicial processes.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.2 Policy changes

To support companies in boosting female in decision-making positions, the Institute has continued promoting focused female development programmes and projects with a gender perspective: On the one hand, "**Promociona Project**") developed in collaboration with the main Spanish employers' organisation (CEOE). On the other hand, the IWEO has also supported the [Progresia Project](#) organised by CEOE for "emerging leaders" and addressed to candidates with a less senior profile. In this project, the Institute provides a gender perspective approach to leadership.

The Institute has also continued supporting and developing the initiative "**Más Mujeres, Mejores Empresas**" (More Women, Better Companies), by which companies sign four-year-long voluntary agreements committing themselves to reach specific targets regarding gender balance in decision-making positions and in boards of director.

As already stated in section 1.2, awareness raising activities for a more equal participation of women and men in decision-making positions at all levels and in all sectors of society has also been continued through the [LinkedIn](#) and twitter profiles of Mujeres, Talento y Liderazgo (**Women, talent and leadership network**). The LinkedIn profile has more than 30.000 followers and has increased its pool of ready-board women to up to more than 580 women from different background and expertise.

To support women in rural areas, the Institute has recently re-launched the programme [Desafío Mujer Rural](#) "**Rural Woman Challenge**", aiming to support rural female entrepreneurship and to overcome the gender gap in rural areas, through training, counselling and supporting a virtual platform to sell their products and services.

On the other hand, given the limited presence of women in the fishing sector and the particular difficulties they face, a direct [grant](#) has been given to the National Association of Women Fisheries (ANMUPESCA) in order to facilitate, in this sector, female associations, to make women's work visible, combat stereotypes and sexist attitudes and stimulate the participation of women in social, economic and cultural spheres and in representative, consultative or decision-making bodies.

4.3 Institutional changes

From January 2020, women make up half of the current number of Ministers (22) in the **Spanish Government**, occupying key portfolios, also for the recovery context: the newly created Ministry of Equality; Economy and Digital Transformation; Presidency, Parliamentary Relations and Democratic Memory; Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge; Foreign Affairs, European Union and co-operation; Work and Social Economy; Education; Industry, Commerce and Tourism; and, Finance and Government Spokesperson. In addition, the Ministers holding the second and third portfolios mentioned above are also Vice-Presidents of the Government.

On its part, IWEO has joined the Spanish network of **Target Gender Equality of the UN Global Compact** in its role as expert advisor of the network providing information and tools for companies participating in the initiative, to support them in the implementation of the Women's Empowerment Principles and strengthen their contribution to Sustainable Development Goal 5.5, which calls for equal women representation, participation and leadership in business globally.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

A new Protocol on referral of applicants for international protection of potential **victims of Trafficking in Human Beings** (Hereinafter THB) that arrive to Barajas airport has been applied by the Secretary of State for Migrations. The aim is a more efficient co-ordination between all authorities involved and a quick referral of potential victims of THB to the most appropriate reception place.

More **specific accommodation places** for victims of gender violence and victims of THB have been funded by the International Protection Programmes. Specific emergency places for potential victims of THB have been funded with the aim of protecting a potential victim of THB as soon as the authorities detect indicators.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

The Secretary of State for Migration is working in finalising a **Protocol for dealing with gender violence** within the centres financed by the General Directorate for Inclusion and Humanitarian Aid. The Protocol will apply to refugee centres and humanitarian aid centres financed by the referred General Directorate.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Reference must be made in the first place to the **measures concerning the COVID-19** crisis that have been taken by the Spanish Government (See Council of Europe information on “Women’s Rights and the COVID-19 pandemic, [Spain](#)”) to support the continuity of productive activity and the maintenance of employment, that are specially connected with women:

– Royal Decree-Law 8/2020, of 17 March, on extraordinary urgent measures to face the economic and social impact of COVID-19:

- Establishment of remote work on a preferential basis (Article 5).
- Right to the **adaptation of working hours and reduction of the working day** (with the proportional reduction of their salary) due to the care needs of family members as an individual right of each one of the parents or caregivers an individual right of each one of the parents or caregivers (article 6). This measure has been extended until 31 January 2021, by RD-law 28/2020, of 22 September on distance working.
- An **extraordinary temporary benefit for self-employed workers** whose activities were suspended, in the terms established in this Royal Decree-Law (Article 17).

Further legislation was approved foreseeing benefits and other measures for self-employed workers affected by COVID-19 who complied with the set requirements (RD law 24/2020, of 26 June, on social measures to reactivate employment and to protect self-employed work and RD-law 30/2020, 29 September on social measures to defend employment).

- Measures adopted regarding **temporary suspension of contracts and temporary reduction of working hours**, (ERTE, Spanish acronym). The ERTE caused by the coronavirus crisis was considered force majeure. Coverage for workers affected by an ERTE, enables them to have access to the contributory unemployment benefit, even if they lack the contribution period necessary to have access to it.

This measure has been extended until 31 January 2021, due to the evolution of COVID-19, by RD-law 30/2020, 29 September on social measures to defend employment.

- Royal Decree-Law 11/2020, of 31 March, which adopts urgent complementary measures in the social and economic field to deal with COVID-19:

Extraordinary subsidy for lack of activity for persons registered in the Special System of **Household Employees** of the General Social Security Regime, who have been forced to, totally or partially, stop rendering their services on a temporary basis due to the COVID-19 health crisis, or whose contract has terminated for this same reason. The amount of the subsidy will be 70% to the applicable regulatory base (articles 30 and 31).

Other legislative measures that must be highlighted this year are:

- Royal Decree-Law 20/2020, of 31 March, establishing the **Minimum Living Income**

Its aim is to fight against poverty and to leave no-one behind. It is expected to benefit some 850,000 households in total and 2.3 million people, of which 1 million are currently suffering from extreme poverty. It will provide special protection to single-parent households and children, contributing to mitigate women's risk of social exclusion. Older women victims of gender-based violence or victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation can also benefit from this Income.

- Royal Decree-Law 28/2020, of 22 September, on **distance working**:

Distance working, teleworking, workplace attendance and what is considered as regular distance working are defined for the purposes of this Royal Decree Law. It grants distance workers the same rights as those who carry out their activities in the company's premises and the former cannot be placed at a disadvantage in their working conditions. It is voluntary-based for the employee and employer and requires the signature of a distance working agreement. Expenses related with distance working will be paid by the company and the right to disconnect will be guaranteed.

6.2 Policy changes

In relation with **gender and climate change**, the **COP25**, the Conference of the Parties, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), was hosted in **Madrid in December 2019**. A new 5-year Gender Action Plan (GAP) was adopted addressing many of the concerns raised by women NGOs, including calls for greater focus on implementation and scaling up gender-just climate solutions. In this regard, the Institute of Women presented in June a **report on Gender and climate change**.

Furthermore, IWEQ has collaborated in the inclusion of the gender perspective in the Spanish **Circular Economy Strategy 2030**, approved on June 2 by the Council of Ministers, in the **II National Plan of Adaptation to Climate Change 2021-2030**, recently approved by the Council of Ministers on 22 September, as well as in the **Long-Term Decarbonisation Strategy 2050**.

To facilitate the labour inclusion of women in a **more vulnerable situation**, the Institute of Women has recently launched a new edition of the **SARA programme**, consisting in developing and implementing specific programmes to facilitate the labour insertion of women in vulnerable situations such as Roma women, migrant women, elderly women, etc. The programme is developed in collaboration with CEPAIM Foundation, the Spanish Red Cross, the Fundación Secretariado Gitano and the Spanish Federation of Popular Universities.

6.3 Institutional changes

Within the collaboration agreement signed between the IWEO and the Civil Guard to provide advice in mainstreaming the gender perspective, training and workshops on gender equality have been carried out, also collaborating in the monitoring of the I Equality Plan of the Civil Guard.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The **National Institute of Public Administration** (INAP), continues providing, mostly online, due to the COVID-19 crisis, gender equality training to public employees in its annual programme, to raise awareness of the value of equality between women and men and to incorporate the gender perspective in their daily work.

The Institute of Women, in addition to collaborating with INAP, provides **training** on gender equality within the framework of on-going training in different Ministries.

Additionally, in order to raise awareness about the links between **gender inequalities and poverty**, the Institute of Women collaborated with the European Network of Equality Bodies (EQUINET) in organising a Roundtable and workshops on Women in Poverty (October 2020) to create space for discussion on breaking the cycle of women in poverty. The event aimed to give a platform for women in poverty to tell their stories; to identify their specific needs and to explore how equality bodies can support them.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

a) As concerns factors that positively influence the implementation of policies and measures, mention must be made to the recovery of the **Ministry of Equality** which places equality policies as a State policy and is a decisive impulse and development of the principle of gender mainstreaming in the General State Administration.

Regarding **dialogue with civil society**, it is worth noting the significance of the feminist movement in our country and the effort made by the Government to reactivate collegiate bodies for co-ordination and co-operation on equality, forums for meetings between administrations and/or civil society. These bodies are of vital importance for the development of equality policies and for the implementation of the State Pact against Gender Violence.

However, in order to effectively implement the commitments made in the **State Pact against Gender Violence**, progress must continue to be made in achieving effective inter-institutional co-ordination mechanisms between the three levels of Government (national, regional and local), as well as in monitoring and evaluating the measures of the Pact.

Regarding the private sector, the promotion of **corporate social responsibility** (CSR) in our country has reinforced companies' commitment to the achievement of equality between women and men. In this way, as has been shown throughout this report, alliances between public and private sectors in terms of equal treatment and opportunities and/or the fight against gender violence are becoming increasingly common and important.

b) See section 9.

8. Additional comments, if any

The Third Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities 2021-2024, which is, currently, being drawn up, is the Spanish Government's instrument for identifying the **challenges** and guiding and planning the institutional and social changes that need to be made in order to make progress in **achieving equality between women and men**.

The challenges identified in this Third Plan are aligned, in particular, with the equality objectives contained in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, in the European Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2035, in the Spanish Government's Programme for the XIV Legislature, in the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan 2021-2026, and, in the Istanbul Convention.

Likewise, these challenges are developed in four major areas of intervention, good governance; aiming towards an economy for life and the fair distribution of wealth; effective rights for women; and striving to achieve a country without violence.

SWEDEN

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

Violence prevention programmes

The work on sexism has focused on challenging traditional gender stereotypes that link masculinity with violence as a root cause of violence. The Swedish Government has an agreement with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions to introduce and share lessons learned from the ongoing violence prevention programmes in Swedish schools. One of the programmes is Mentors in Violence Prevention, a peer mentoring programme that invites young people to challenge attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underlie gender-based violence and other forms of violence. The programme is currently undergoing an evaluation to analyse the impact of the programme.

Time-use survey

Statistics Sweden (SCB) has been commissioned in 2020 to carry out a pilot study with the aim of testing a new approach for a time-use survey among women and men that has been conducted every ten years since 1990. The statistics from the survey provide a picture of people's everyday lives and show how the population divides their time into various activities, such as leisure and home-work activities. The statistics show differences in women's and men's time use, but also how time use varies in the different phases of life.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

New legislation against honour-related violence and oppression

On 1 July 2020, new legislation against honour-related violence and oppression was introduced.

- a) A new offence, child marriage, was introduced as a separate offence. The new penal provision makes it a criminal offence to persuade or allow a child to enter into a marriage or a marriage-like relationship.
- b) Honour motives for severe punishment, meaning that if a motive behind the crime has been to preserve or restore honour, it should be seen as an aggravating circumstance in the assessment of the value of the punishment.
- c) A possibility to issue a travel ban was introduced in order to protect children from being brought out the country for the purpose of child marriage or genital mutilation. A travel ban constitutes both an obstacle to issuing a passport and a reason for revoking a passport. It is further illegal to bring a child out of Sweden in violation of a travel ban.

Proposal for a special honour-based offence

In October 2020 an inquiry proposed to introduce a specific offence for repeated honour-based acts targeting the same victim. The offence has the offences gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity as a model. The difference being that the proposed new offence does not contain a requirement for the perpetrator and the victim to be in a close relationship. The inquiry proposal is sent on referral.

Proposal for penalties for incitement to suicide

In November 2020, a proposal for new legislation was referred to lagrådet ("the Council on Legislation") proposing to introduce two new crimes - incitement to suicide and negligent incitement

to suicide - which means that in certain circumstances it will be a criminal offense to incite or in any other way influence a person to take his/her life

Government grants to counteract violence during COVID-19

In Spring 2020, the Swedish Government commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare to distribute SEK 100 million in government grants to organisations working with children in vulnerable situations, abused women, children and LGBTQ people and against violence in close relationships, including honour-related violence and oppression to meet increased or changing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government has also commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare to distribute SEK 20 billion in state grants to municipalities and regions for additional costs as a result of the COVID-19 disease within health care and social services for the care of the elderly and for people with disabilities.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Follow-up the gender equality policy sub-goal on equal distribution of power and influence

The Gender Equality Agency has been commissioned to analyse and follow-up the development in the Swedish gender equality policy sub-goal ‘An equal distribution of power and influence’. The Agency has also been commissioned to analyse the conditions and opportunities for women and men in areas with socio-economic challenges to participate in democratic processes and to exercise influence locally. The results will to be reported to the Government in early 2021.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

Gender mainstreaming in Government Offices

Gender mainstreaming within the Swedish Government Offices is based on a government decision and a decision made by the Prime Minister, as head of the Government Offices, for the period 2016–2021. The decision establishes that gender mainstreaming covers all work carried out within the Government Offices but highlights four central processes in particular: the legislation process, agency governance, EU remits and the budget process. The work has been reviewed during 2020 and results will feed into a governmental decision for a new period.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency supports government agencies and higher education institutions in gender mainstreaming

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is in charge of two development programmes supporting Swedish higher education institutions and a large number of government agencies in their gender mainstreaming work. The support provided to the government agencies aims to make them even better able to contribute to the central goal of Swedish gender equality policy, which is for women and men to have the same power to shape society and their own lives. The support is offered in both the planning and implementation phases of the agencies’ development work. The programmes shall also co-ordinate training efforts, arrange forums for the sharing of experiences among the agencies, identify and disseminate best practices and document the results of the agencies’ work.

Programme for gender mainstreaming in government authorities

To strengthen the government authorities' work with gender mainstreaming, the government has since 2013 conducted a development programme for gender mainstreaming in government authorities. More than 50 government agencies have been instructed by the Government to integrate a gender perspective in all of their operations. The programme was initiated in 2013–2014 with a pilot phase involving 18 volunteer agencies. In 2015, the programme was expanded with 23 new government agencies and in 2016, another 18 agencies and one organisation with certain official responsibilities were added. The programme has resulted in several of the participating authorities changing their way of working and thereby contributing to increased gender equality for their target groups.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been tasked to support the agencies also during the new programme period, 2020–2025. The participating government authorities are to identify and address concrete gender equality problems in their core activities as well as to collaborate with other relevant civil organisations and governmental agencies to increase their contribution to gender equality in society. The Gender Equality Agency shall, among other things, provide and disseminate knowledge and support on the recommended gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming methods, facilitate co-operation between the participating authorities, and, if necessary, prioritise which support measures and activities deemed to most likely to contribute to achieving the gender equality policy goals.

Gender Mainstreaming in Academia

In 2016, the Government tasked all public-sector universities and university colleges with producing a plan outlining their intended gender mainstreaming efforts and how gender equality will be integrated and become a part of their ordinary activities. The assignment, called Gender Mainstreaming in Academia, instructs the institutions to gender mainstream all of their operations according to individually developed gender mainstreaming plans. This can include equal opportunities regarding research careers and combating gender-based study choices.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been tasked for 2021 and 2022 to provide an adapted support in dialogue with each higher education institution (HEI) and other actors relevant to the sector. The assignment includes offering support in mainstreaming gender into activities, competence-enhancing initiatives, promoting exchanges of best practices and learning examples between higher education institutions, as well as following up the results and effects of the gender mainstreaming efforts. The Gender Equality Authority shall also offer higher education institutions support in identifying and disseminating learning examples of method development and target group-adapted presentations of results.

Weblinks:

<https://www.government.se/articles/2020/04/gender-mainstreaming-in-government-agencies/>

<https://www.jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/en/gender-mainstreaming/government-agencies-higher-education-institutions>

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The COVID-19 crisis from a gender equality perspective

The outbreak of the new coronavirus and the spread of COVID-19 disease is a global crisis for human life and health.

The COVID-19 pandemic was analysed early on to have gender implications in relation to health, violence and the economy. Men had a higher mortality rate than women, more women than men

work in the healthcare sector, more women worked in sectors that were affected by the COVID-crisis and more women are at risk of violence during crisis.

Increased governmental grants was made available to organisations working with children in vulnerable situations, abused women, children and LGBTQ people and against violence in close relationships, including honour-related violence and oppression to meet increased or changing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Gender Equality Agency was commissioned to reach out with information to victims of violence on how and where they could seek aid and civil society organisations developed digital information to potential victims of violence.

To mitigate the economic effects on society of the COVID-19 outbreak, several measures have been taken by the Swedish Government. The measures are intended to provide greater security for those affected by the pandemic by limiting the spread of the virus, combating the effects on businesses and jobs and providing financial security and transition opportunities for those who become unemployed.

The economic impact of the coronavirus is hitting the business sector very hard. To support viable companies during the crisis and reduce the number of jobs lost, the government has presented several crisis packages containing measures to reduce costs, strengthen liquidity and improve access to financing. These initiatives will contribute to both women's and men's economic situation.

Despite the extensive measures the Swedish Government has taken to support viable businesses, many people are going to lose their jobs. In view of the present economic situation several temporary changes have been made in unemployment insurance to make it easier to qualify for benefit and to ensure that this insurance provides greater financial security for people who become unemployed. More funding has been provided for the Swedish Public Employment Service to deal with higher unemployment and ensure equivalent service levels throughout the country. Funds are also being provided to enable more people to participate in measures leading to jobs, such as employment training and support and matching services. In addition, more places have been provided at universities and other higher education institutions, higher vocational education, vocational adult education and folk high schools. Of all unemployed people, 54% are men and 46% are women.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected an already strained staffing situation for health and social care, not least in care of the elderly, where many women work. At the same time, employment has declined in many other sectors as a result of redundancy notices and job cuts. To improve the supply of staff and make it more attractive to seek jobs in care of the elderly, a boost for care of the elderly is being implemented that means that employees in care of the elderly will be offered paid education and training during working hours.

For those who require it, it will be possible to combine employment with training to become nursing assistants or auxiliary nurses during paid working hours. Central government will finance the costs for the time the employee is absent due to studies. The initiative comprises SEK 2.2 billion in 2020 and 2021. It is in line with the proposal presented by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union, which made the assessment that 10 000 people could be included.

To ensure that there are sufficient education and training places, the Government is also increased funds so that 10,000 people can attend education and training focused on health and social care at regional vocational adult education institutions during the fourth quarter of 2020 if they study part-time. These places will be wholly funded by central government in 2020. Municipalities will fund 30% of the education and training places that are sought for 2021.

In June 2020, the Swedish Government appointed a committee of inquiry to evaluate the measures taken by the Government, administrative authorities and municipalities to limit the spread of COVID-19 and the effects of its spread. The committee of inquiry shall also report the consequences for gender equality as well as evaluate how relevant authorities and other actors worked during the

pandemic to detect exposure to intimate partner violence and honour-related violence and oppression and to provide adequate protection and support.

The situation in Sweden is somewhat different when it comes to the COVID-19 related increase in unpaid domestic and care work. The schools and the pre-schools (kindergarten etc.) have been open just as before the COVID-19. Since approximately 94% of the children between 3-5 years are enrolled in the children care system throughout the day, the fact that the pre-schools are open is of major importance when it comes to daily domestic and care work.

Even though the pre-schools and schools have been open there have been no tolerance of sending children with the slightest symptom of sickness to pre-school or school. That means that children are at home and need care to a larger extend than before COVID-19. To ease that situation, the government has expanded the opportunities to receive temporary parental benefit temporarily during the pandemic. If it should be necessary to close e.g. preschools and schools to limit the spread of the virus, parents who have to stay home from work to care for children will be eligible for temporary parental benefit.

SWITZERLAND

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

Le 9 février 2020, l'ajout de l'homophobie comme motif d'incitation à la haine à l'Article 261bis du Code pénal a été accepté en votation populaire. Cet ajout est effectif depuis le 1^{er} juillet 2020.

Le 1^{er} janvier 2021, le congé de paternité adopté par le peuple en septembre 2020 entrera en vigueur. D'une durée de deux semaines, il pourra être pris en bloc ou par jours, dans les six mois suivant la naissance.

1.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Le Conseil fédéral adoptera une stratégie nationale pour l'égalité entre femmes et hommes en 2021. Celle-ci définira les priorités, les objectifs et les mesures à prendre dans les domaines au cœur de l'égalité en Suisse (en particulier : égalité salariale, conciliation entre vie professionnelle et vie familiale, lutte contre la violence et le sexisme).

1.3 changements institutionnels

Un organe pourrait être créé pour piloter la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie nationale pour l'égalité 2030 (cf. ch. 1.2).

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Le Conseil fédéral a proposé d'adopter la motion Rytz visant à mener « une campagne de prévention du sexisme à large impact, qui se déroule sur plusieurs années et recourt à divers canaux (réseaux sociaux, affiches, annonces publicitaires dans les journaux, les cinémas, etc.) ». La motion est actuellement examinée par le Parlement.

Le Parlement examine aussi la Motion Herzog demandant que les statistiques et études de la Confédération contiennent systématiquement des données sur les conséquences de celles-ci sur les sexes.

1.5 autres développements pertinents

L'association Alliance F a récemment publié le site internet « <https://stophatespeech.ch/fr/> » permettant de reconnaître et de lutter contre les différentes formes de discours de haine en ligne au moyen d'un algorithme détectant ce type de discours et d'une communauté s'attellant à y répondre.

2. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 changements législatifs

Femmes victimes de violence

Avec l'entrée en vigueur de la Loi fédérale sur l'amélioration de la protection des victimes de violence le 1^{er} juillet 2020, diverses modifications (amélioration de la communication entre autorités, abandon des frais judiciaires, abandon de la procédure de conciliation) ont permis d'améliorer la prévention de la violence contre les femmes ainsi que leur accès à la justice.

Ordonnance contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique

Le 1^{er} janvier 2020, l'Ordonnance sur les mesures visant à prévenir et à combattre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique, adoptée en accord avec la Convention d'Istanbul, est entrée en vigueur. Cette ordonnance contribue à prévenir la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique et favorise la coordination des acteurs de la prévention et de la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique en Suisse.

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

cf. chiffre 1.2 ci-dessus concernant la Stratégie Egalité.

2.3 changements institutionnels

Conformément à l'Ordonnance mentionnée au ch. 2.1 ci-dessus, le Bureau fédéral de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes (BFEG) pourra octroyer des aides financières à des projets de prévention de la violence. Le Conseil fédéral lui a octroyé un crédit annuel de 3 millions de francs. Cette décision doit encore être avalisée par le Parlement à la session d'hiver 2020.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Le BFEG évalue actuellement, en collaboration avec l'Office fédéral de la statistique, la faisabilité d'une enquête sur la fréquence des violences à l'égard des femmes et de la violence domestique.

2.5 autres développements pertinents

Le site internet « www.aide-aux-victimes.ch » a été remanié afin de mieux sensibiliser les personnes touchées par la violence quant à leurs droits. En parallèle, une campagne sur les réseaux sociaux a été menée en mai et juin 2020, pour faire connaître aux victimes de violence les possibilités de soutien dont elles disposent.

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.1 changements législatifs

cf. chiffre 2.1 ci-dessus.

3.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

cf. chiffre 2.1 ci-dessus.

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.1 changements législatifs

Des modifications du Code des obligations (droit de la société anonyme) entreront en vigueur en 2021, parmi lesquelles figure l'introduction de seuils de référence pour la représentation de chaque sexe au sein des conseils d'administration (min. 30%) et des directions (min. 20%) des sociétés cotées en bourse employant plus de 250 personnes. Aucune sanction n'est prévue. Dans le cas où une société n'attendrait pas ces seuils de référence, elle devra uniquement s'expliquer (« comply or explain ») dans son rapport de rémunération et indiquer les mesures prévues pour y remédier. L'obligation de fournir ces informations sera effective cinq ans après l'entrée en vigueur des modifications pour les conseils d'administration et dix ans après pour les directions.

Le nombre de femmes élues au Conseil national le 20 octobre 2019 (42 %, 84 femmes) a fortement augmenté par rapport à 2015 (32 %, 64 femmes). Actuellement, la part de femmes siégeant au Conseil national se situe à 41,5 % (83 femmes pour 200 sièges ; état au 31 août 2020) et à 26,1 % au Conseil des États (12 femmes pour 46 sièges).

4.5 autres développements pertinents

Sur la plateforme commune de la Chancellerie fédérale, de l'Office fédéral de la statistique et de « ch.ch », « <https://www.ch.ch/fr/elections2019/> », un dossier « Femmes et élections » a été publié à l'occasion des élections 2019.

7. Principaux défis ; leçons à retirer

L'augmentation de la représentation des femmes au Parlement suisse (cf. chiffre 4.1 ci-dessus) a certainement eu une influence bénéfique sur l'issue du traitement de certains objets parlementaires (voir à cet égard, l'enquête de la Radio Télévision Suisse [RTS] sur l'influence du vote des femmes au Conseil national ; [lien](#)).

8. Commentaires additionnels, le cas échéant

Suite à l'entrée en vigueur des modifications à la loi sur l'égalité le 1^{er} juillet 2020, les entités employeuses (du secteur privé ou public) occupant un effectif d'au moins 100 personnes (soit environ 1% des employeurs et 46% des salarié-e-s en Suisse) doivent procéder à des analyses régulières de l'égalité salariale. Le bon déroulement de cette analyse sera vérifié par une tierce partie (entreprise de révision agréée, organisation au sens de l'article 7 LEg ou représentation de travailleurs). Les employeurs devront informer leur personnel des résultats de l'analyse. Les sociétés cotées en bourse devront publier les résultats de l'audit dans leur rapport annuel, en vue d'informer les actionnaires. Les employeurs du secteur public devront publier des renseignements détaillés sur les résultats de l'analyse de l'égalité salariale.

L'outil d'auto-analyse de l'égalité salariale [Logib](#) a récemment été modernisé et est désormais disponible sous la forme d'une application web en allemand, français, italien et anglais. En avril 2020, l'outil Logib a été certifié en tant que bonne pratique par l'Organisation internationale du travail (OIT), l'Organisation de coopération et de développements économiques (OCDE) et ONU Femmes, dans le cadre de la coalition internationale « Equal Pay International Coalition ». Un outil semblable pour les petites entreprises a été développé et sera disponible d'ici à la fin de l'année 2020.

TURKEY

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

- It was stated in the Article 1.4 of the “Declaration of Ethics for Turkish Judiciary (2019)” that, judges and prosecutors will absolutely reject discrimination based on sex as well as other forms of discrimination and will not use a discriminatory discourse. It is clearly emphasised that positive discrimination enshrined in the Constitution shall not be considered as violation of the principle of equality.
- The 11th Development Plan (2019-2023) which will serve as a roadmap in reflecting the equality guaranteed in the legislation in every area of life was approved in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) on 18 July 2019. Under the “Woman” title of the Plan, preventing all kinds of discrimination against women, ensuring that women benefit equally from the rights, opportunities and facilities in all areas of the social life and empowering them has been articulated as the main objective.

1.2 Policy changes

- Women are included in the priority group in the “Work Programmes for Public Benefit” which enables the disadvantaged groups to enter into the labour market. Women constituted 59% of the programme beneficiaries in 2019.

1.3 Institutional changes

- As stated in the previous reporting period, in order to ensure the local applicability of the “Co-operation Protocol on Strengthening Women's Co-operatives” signed on 30 October 2018 in co-operation with the MoFLSS, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Commerce, “Strengthening Women's Co-operatives Co-operation Protocol Implementation Principles” was prepared and shared with Provincial Directorates of MoFLSS. Within the framework of Implementation Principles, “Women's Co-operatives Working Groups” were established in provinces. In this context, various events are organised in the provinces in co-operation with local dynamics. A total of 26,784 people was reached through 637 workshops, training and information activities; 218 women co-operatives were visited and 122 new women's co-operatives were established. In addition, in order to develop co-operation and dialogue in the field of women's co-operatives, to raise awareness and to spread good practices, on 29 November 2019 “Women's Co-operatives Regional Meeting” events was held in Çorum, on 15 October 2020 and 21 December 2020 online meetings were held. A brochure which will guide women in co-operatives was published and distributed in all provinces. In addition, with the aim of strengthening women's co-operatives, ensuring their sustainability, developing their institutional capacities, increasing their visibility, the “Empowerment of Women through Co-operatives Project” will be carried out in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Technical preparations of the project, which has 3,415,000€ budget and is planned to last 30 months, are in progress.

1.4 Research and awareness-raising

- As stated in the previous reporting period, “Financial Literacy and Women's Economic Empowerment Seminars” have been held since 2017. Through seminars, it is aimed to increase women's awareness on issues such as money management, income, spending, savings, assets, debt, savings, investment, investment instruments, private pension system, and to provide information on support and incentives for women's economic empowerment. In the period of October 2019-December 2020, 70 events were held in 40 provinces in co-operation with local dynamics, reaching a total of 448,930 people.

- Starting in 2015, “Turkey's Engineer Girl Project” is continuing. It was decided to continue the project for one more year and the completion date was extended to 31 December 2021. The project, which supports female students who are and/or will receive engineering education, consists of two separate programmes for female students studying at high school and university.

With the high school programme; students, their parents and teachers are informed about the engineering profession through different activities. With the activities, in the 2019-2020 academic year, 10,000 students were reached in 25 high schools in 10 provinces. With the university programme; Successful female students studying at engineering faculties and in need of financial support are supported by educational scholarships, internship and employment opportunities, English language training, ‘Leadership in Engineering’ certificate programme training and mentoring/coaching programme through volunteer female engineers. A total of 120 female students benefited from the programme in the 2019-2020 academic year.

- An awareness-raising activity was organised in co-operation with Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) and MoFLSS on the occasion of “**International Girls in ICT Day**” on 18 April 2018 with the participation of 500 persons in order to enable young girls to evaluate their current career opportunities in the field of information and communication technologies. In 2019, a programme was organised with the participation of female students of high schools and trainers in order to draw attention to the goal of achieving equality between women and men in the fields of ICT and engineering, science and mathematics in co-operation with BTK.
- In the contents of the textbooks and teaching materials used in primary and secondary schools, the number of male and female characters was tried to be equal, and the democratic structure and parental roles in the family were carefully expressed in the sections where family-related issues were discussed. Maximum attention has been paid to exclude understandings that ignore or damage the principle of equality between women and men.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

- *Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men* (KEFEK) of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey received a total of 106 individual applications between 1 April 2014-21 February 2020 regarding the allegations of discrimination and equality of opportunity for women and men.
- As stated in the previous report period, with the “Mother at Work Project”, which was implemented to support the employment of women with children in the 0-15 age group, intensive consultancy services are provided to women in Job Clubs, and then they are directed to vocational training courses or on-the-job training programmes with 50% employment guarantee. From 2018 to the end of October 2020, 41,109 women have benefited from the Project.
- On 25 November 2020, the online meeting of “The Role of Television Series in Combating Violence Against Women” was held with the participation of First Lady H.E Emine Erdoğan, ministers, bureaucrats, producers, artists, actors, writers and academicians.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

- With the decision of the Board of Judges and Prosecutors dated 27 December 2019, work distribution was made for family courts to specialise in the field of combating violence against women, thus, some family courts were authorised to deal with only the works and transactions carried out within the scope of Law No. 6284.

2.2 Policy changes

- National Action Plans for Combating Violence Against Women are prepared and implemented by General Directorate on the Status of Women (GDSW) with the contribution and participation of

all relevant parties in order to define the basic policy priorities in combating violence against women and to create a road map. In this context, the implementation period of the third “National Action Plan for Combating Violence Against Women 2016-2020”, which is currently in force, expires in December 2020. Therefore, preparations for the 4th National Action Plan and Strategy Document on Combating Violence Against Women, to be implemented in the 2021-2025 period, started as of August 2020.

- **“Provincial Action Plans for Combating Violence Against Women”** are in effect in all provinces as of August 2019 in order to ensure more effective implementation of the National Action Plan. The monitoring and evaluation of the provincial action plan activities are carried out in the “Provincial Co-ordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee on Combating Violence Against Women” meetings that convene every six months under the chairmanship of the governor or deputy governor.
- **The “Monitoring Committee on Violence against Women”** has been convening regularly under the co-ordination of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) since 2006 in order to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Action Plan and to share information and experience on the efforts to combat violence against women and the problems experienced. The 14th meeting of the Committee was held under the chairmanship of the Minister of Family, Labour and Social Services in Ankara on 24 December 2020 with the participation of the Ministers of Justice and Interior.
- The activities to be carried out by the relevant institutions were determined in the **“Co-ordination Plan for Combating Violence Against Women”**, which was prepared by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health and the Directorate of Religious Affairs under the leadership of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. The Co-ordination Plan entered into force on 25 November 2019. In order to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the said plan, a Technical Board for Combating Violence Against Women was established.

2.3 Institutional changes

- The General Directorate on the Status of Women (GDSW) acts as a co-ordination institution involved in all processes from determining policies and strategies for combating violence against women to implementing and monitoring.
- **Women's shelters and “Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres”** (VPMCs) affiliated to the General Directorate on the Status of Women constitute service delivery points in all provinces in local level. Women's shelters are residential social service institutions where women who have been subjected to physical, emotional, sexual, economic and verbal violence can stay with their children (if any) temporarily. These institutions protect victims from violence, provide guidance for psychosocial and economic problems along with empowerment efforts.
- VPMCs, on the other hand, are responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the measures for victims of violence within the scope of the **“Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women”**. At the same time, psychosocial, legal, educational-professional, health and economic support counselling and guidance services are provided.
- In addition, in order to facilitate access to the victim and to strengthen the effective combat against violence against women on province/district level, contact points have been determined in 354 Social Service Centres.
- The **“Combating Violence Against Women Headquarters”**, which was an establishment at the provincial level, has been expanded to the district level in order to monitor all the works and transactions carried in the area of responsibility of the General Directorate of Security at the provincial/district level. In this context, the number of bureau chiefs, which was 81 in 2015, reached 1005 in 2020.

- **“Children and Women Section Chiefs”** have been established within all Provincial Gendarmerie Commands, in order to carry out, co-ordinate and direct operations for women and children from one centre, to accumulate institutional memory and to follow up developments.
- People who are subjected to violence within the scope of the Law No. 6284 can directly apply to the Public Prosecutor’s Office. In addition, **“Domestic Violence Crimes Investigation Offices”** have started to be established within the body of prosecution offices especially in metropolitan cities. There are 192 Domestic Violence Crimes Investigation Offices within Public Prosecutor’s Office.
- The specialisation efforts of women's shelters, which were initiated by adopting a risk-based approach to provide more efficient services, are continuing.
- Within the scope of these efforts four women's shelters in three provinces were transformed into specialised institutions in 2020. Service Standards Guide has been prepared in order to structure the services in an applicable, sustainable, traceable and measurable way, increase the quality and efficiency of services provided in women’s shelters.
- In line with the Service Standards Guide, training has been organised by Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services in co-operation with the relevant institutions in order to strengthen the capacities of the managers and staff working in service units.
- A Self-Assessment Guide, which includes internal and external evaluation, was prepared along with the Service Standards Guide. The goal of self-assessment is to increase the quality and effectiveness of women's shelter services, and to contribute to the improvement of the capacity of the staff and the empowerment of women and children (accompanying women).
- Within the scope of the development of a **“Risk Analysis and Management Module”** that will increase the quality of services provided by women's service units, a system covering social service intervention steps in line with the risk scale and service standards has been integrated into the Family Information System (ABS). The module started to be implemented in 18 pilot provinces on 17 August 2020. With the Module, which will be expanded to 81 provinces after the completion of the pilot implementation, not only crisis-oriented but also risk-oriented approach will be adopted to ensure the right intervention and effective service delivery to victims of violence.
- The Pilot Scheme for the use of **“Tracking Systems with Technical Methods** was put into effect on 8 March 2015 for 2 years and renewed on 28 June 2019”. Implemented in co-operation with MoFLSS, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior; the system provides more effective protection by using electronic wristbands in which the perpetrator and the victim are monitored together. This practice has been implemented in 15 provinces since June 2019.
- **“183 Social Support Hotline”** within the MoFLSS serves as a psychological, legal and economic advisory hotline for women and children who are at risk of violence and need support and assistance; and provides information about their rights and places to apply. Taking into account the urgency of the situation, intervention is provided by informing the emergency response team manager and / or law enforcement officers of the province where the incident is occurred. This hotline is available 7/24 and is free. Operating in Arabic and Kurdish as well, the hotline is equipped with short message feature and 3G function for the hearing-impaired individuals. In addition, during Covid-19 pandemic, as of March 2020, victims of violence calling 183 Social Support Hotline can reach the relevant support personnel by pressing the **“0”** button, without waiting in the queue. As of May 2020, services have been started to be provided to victims of violence through the WhatsApp.
- By examining the mobile application technologies that can be used in smart phones for the citizens to reach law enforcement officers quickly in the field of public security, the Women's Support (KADES) Application has been put into practice to be used in the field of violence against women. Approximately 1.2 million women have downloaded the application to their phones so far. Within the scope of the Women's Support Application (KADES) project; a total of 592 reports were made to the Provincial Gendarmerie Commands, Gendarmerie Emergency Line and Emergency Call Centre between October 2019 and October 2020.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

- Training courses and seminars are held for the personnel working in public institutions and organisations and university students throughout Turkey in order to raise awareness, to strengthen the equality of women and men and to prevent violence against women. In order to ensure the sustainability of the training, protocols have been signed between Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) and the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Health and National Defence, Gendarmerie General Command, Directorate of Religious Affairs. In this context, training and seminars have been given to 1,966,066 people, including 1,353,943 soldiers, 278,350 law enforcement officers, 158,693 health officials, 100,080 religious officials, 75,000 other public servants, since 2007.
- Within the scope of the activities on combating violence against women; 4 mandatory broadcasts or/and public service announcements prepared by the MoFLSS in 2014, 1 in 2015, 2 in 2016, 3 in 2017, 1 in 2018, 4 in 2019 were sent with Radio and Television Supreme Council's (RTÜK) authorisation to the media service providers in order to be broadcast.
- *(By the Ministry of Interior)* 15,252 personnel in 2019 and 55,491 personnel in 2020 were given training on Combating Violence Against Family and Women, and within the scope of the Ministry of Interior's circular dated 1 January 2020, training is planned for 100,000 Gendarmerie personnel in 2020.
- Under the co-ordination of the Public Security Department,(Ministry of Interior) in order to review and evaluate the work and procedures carried out for the prevention of domestic violence, to take preventive measures and to increase the effectiveness of the security forces in this field a Workshop on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence was held on 11-12 December 2019 with the participation of staff consisting of bureau chiefs and officers, police station chiefs and officers.
- The report "The Importance and Role of Law Enforcement in Combating Domestic Violence and Femicide" prepared by the Department of Internal Security Strategies with the contribution of the Gendarmerie General Command and the General Directorate of Security was published.
- To determine the different dimensions and the causes of violence against women, and to meet the need to collect data for that matter, a comprehensive Domestic Violence Research was held in 2008 in Turkey for the first time. Research was repeated in 2013 with an updated survey and data was published under the name of Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey in 2014.

In recent years, there have been important developments in the implementation of policies and increase in social awareness. The need to repeat this study arose both in order to see the reflection of these developments in the statistics on violence and to obtain up-to-date data.

In this context, in 2021 "Research on Violence against Women in Turkey" will be conducted. It is foreseen to collect data with quantitative and qualitative research methods in the study, which will be evaluated within the scope of TURKSTAT Official Statistics Programme.

- *(By the Ministry of National Education)* The "Course Programme on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence" was put into practice with the approval of the Authority, dated 08/09/2020. This course is compatible with the goals of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and it fulfils the necessities of the second strategic goal of that strategy document.

Depending on that, this course aims for individuals:

- to recognise the concept of the violence, to know the causes of the violence and false beliefs about violence,
- to learn that violence is a major violation of human rights in the world and in Turkey,
- to realise the forms of violence against women and domestic violence,
- to know the effects and consequences of violence against women on children and society,

- to have a general knowledge about international and national legislation on combating violence against women and to know legal sanctions,
- to have information about the institutional application mechanisms in combating violence against women,
- to have information about the plans and programmes implemented by the state for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence,
- to recognise individual and social responsibility in violence against women.

From the date of its implementation until 18 December 2020, 16 courses were opened and 393 trainees participated in these courses.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

- Efforts are underway by MoFLSS to record injunction decisions taken pursuant to Law No. 6284 in a common data system with the inter-agency integration work. The data system integration was completed with the co-ordinated work with the Ministry of Justice regarding data integration, and the system was opened to the use of VPMCs. In this way, the effectiveness of the rapid access to the victim and the follow-up process were increased. A similar Protocol was signed with the General Directorate of Security, and the Registration Form for Violence Against Women and Women has been provided online to the Family Information System. With the Protocol signed on 15 April 2020, the Registration Form for Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, kept under the Gendarmerie General Command, started to be shared electronically with MoFLSS.
- *“Action Plan on Prevention of European Human Rights Convention Violations”* was implemented by the Ministry of Justice between 2014-2019. Under the title *“Taking Necessary Measures to Prevent Domestic Violence, Violence and Especially Murders Against Women as a Positive Obligation of the State”*.
- Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, which emerged at the time of the preparation of this report, additional measures were introduced to eliminate the spread of COVID-19 virus in the women’s shelters, which are among the leading institutional service mechanisms in combating violence against women. In this context, utmost care is given to ensure hygiene in the organisations; the health checks of women and their accompanying children are performed during the admission and co-operation is provided with health institutions when necessary; studies are carried out for the personnel of the organisation on issues to be considered during the pandemic and to ensure the motivation of the personnel. Socially isolated units are arranged in institutions for women who will get service from the institution for the first time and the children accompanying them or for women and their children who stayed in a hospital for a certain period of time for treatment of health problems and returned to the institution following their discharge from the hospital; in case the isolation unit cannot be established in women’s shelters, they are kept under quarantine for at least 14 days at the social facilities, dormitories or similar places belonging to public institutions and organisations within the scope of the Law No. 6284. At the end of the 14-day quarantine period, if it is determined that they do not have any suspicious health conditions, women and their children are admitted to women’s shelters.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

- Applications within the scope of Law No. 6284 are decided by the Family Courts (Civil Courts of First Instance, in the absence of the Family Court). There are 380 active Family Courts in Turkey.
- With the *“Presidential Decree on the Support of Victims of Crime”* published on 10 June 2020, it is planned to expand legal support and victim centres, to increase the employment of expert personnel and to improve legal aid services. With the decree, *“Department of Legal Support and Victim Services Department”* was established and it was envisaged to expand *“Legal Support and*

Victim Services Directorates” in courthouses. In order to provide support to vulnerable groups and victims of crime in the judicial process, Forensic Support and Victim Centres have been established within the courthouses. In these units, psycho-social support services are provided to the victims.

- Within the scope of “Co-ordination Plan for Combating Violence Against Women (2020-2021)”, The Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a circular on 1 January 2020 in order to implement the duties and responsibilities given in the legislation without delay, to increase the effectiveness and institutional capacity in the measures taken, to improve co-ordination and co-operation, and to increase social awareness.
- In order to eliminate the problems that arise during the investigation of domestic violence and crimes of violence against women and the implementation of the preventive and protective measure decisions issued by the Ministry of Justice within the scope of the Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women/Circular number 154/1 was issued on 17 December 2019.
- On the other hand, in 2020, Governorship Circulars were issued in 81 provinces to ensure effective co-operation and co-ordination at provincial level. It is considered that these steps will contribute to the protection of victims of violence and their access to justice.

3.3 Institutional changes

- Apart from the judicial authorities, there are more than one mechanism that contributes to the access of individuals who are victims of violence to justice. These mechanisms are the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Human Rights Investigation Commission, the Equal Opportunity Commission for Women and Men, and the Petition Commission, the Ombudsman's Office, the Human Rights and Equality Institution.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

- There is a standalone course for combating violence against women in the training given to judges by the Justice Academy of Turkey.
- The joint European Union and Council of Europe Action on "Fostering a comprehensive institutional response to violence against women and domestic violence in Turkey" aims at strengthening institutional mechanisms in Turkey to co-ordinate and effectively apply the standards and developing knowledge and skills of key authorities responsible for preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, protecting victims/survivors and prosecuting the perpetrators of violence. The project, which started in May 2019, is planned to last 36 months. Training of trainers will be provided to approximately 100 people, including the police, the judiciary, the gendarmerie, and professionals from the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. Collecting and analysing administrative data on violence against women will be improved.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

- Necessary technical arrangements have been made in the Integrated Social Assistance Information System in order to prevent the ineligibility of the women with a protection order for the social assistance programmes provided by Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Services, due to the privacy of address information.
- The access of beneficiary citizens to social assistance and other public services (social services, employment, education, health, etc.) will be increased by the transition to the Integrated Social Protection Period. In this context, integration has been achieved between the Integrated Social Assistance Information System (BSYBS), where the social assistance programmes carried out by the Ministry, and the Family Information System (ABS), where social service activities are carried out. By this way, cases such as early marriage, violence against women, the need for psychological support of women and the need for legal support of women detected during the household visits carried out by the staff of the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation are shared with relevant

staff and these citizens are directed to the social services such as care, rehabilitation and psychological support and to other public services.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

- On 24 October 2019, “Problems and Solution Proposals Workshop for Women with Disabilities” was held in Ankara with the participation of relevant institutions and organisations and NGO representatives. The workshop was conducted in three sessions: “Social Status of Women with Disabilities”, “Women with Disabilities and Working Life”, “Care and Accommodation of Women in Need of Care”. The workshop report was prepared for each session and shared with the relevant institutions in an official letter.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

- Emergency Social Safety Net for foreigners residing in our country and Conditional Education Assistance for Foreigners programmes are carried out and these social assistance programmes are financed by the European Union. With these mentioned assistance programmes, it is aimed to support foreign nationals in need who reside outside of temporary accommodation centres, and in the Conditional Education Assistance for Foreigners programme, which is carried out with the condition that they send their children to school, the amount of assistance given for girls is kept higher than boys.

5.3 Institutional changes

- Migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women can benefit from all the services offered at VPMCs and Women’s Shelter.
- A project within the framework of “Financial Assistance Programme for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT-II)” will be implemented in all provinces. The planned activities are as follows:
 - Providing computers to institutional service units,
 - Providing a vehicle with driver to service units;
 - Establishing a standard intervention programme (Psycho-Social Support and Intervention Programme) for the services provided and conducting a series of workshops and training within the scope of the programme;
 - conducting basic and advanced training to improve the service provision capacity of professionals and support personnel;
 - making provincial study visits within the scope of monitoring and evaluation activities and holding provincial meetings to increase the co-operation and co-ordination between relevant institutions and organisations.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

- Visual materials prepared and distributed in order to raise awareness for combating violence against women in languages used by the immigrant population, especially Arabic.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.3 Institutional changes

- “The Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women’s Empowerment”, another action plan developed under the co-ordination of General Directorate on the Status of Women was prepared to cover the period 2018-2023. The Action Plan aimed at promotion of women’s participation in economic and social life; ensuring women’s equal access to rights and opportunities; mainstreaming the principle of equality between women and men into all main plans and

programmes, has been a very comprehensive action plan prepared for women's empowerment. "The Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment 2018-2023" includes five main policy pillars for women's empowerment. These are as follows: Education; Economy; Health; Participation in Decision-Making Mechanisms; and Media.

- With the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment, various duties and responsibilities are distributed among the public institutions and organisations, local authorities and private sector.
- EU Project "**Gender Responsive Budgeting Planning and Implementation in Turkey**" started on 15 December 2020 with 3.3 million € budget. The project includes the following objectives:
 - to create political, bureaucratic awareness about gender sensitive planning;
 - to improve the institutional capacity and sustainability of gender sensitive public policies, plans, programmes and budget processes in central and local governments;
 - to improve the monitoring capacity for gender-responsive planning and budgeting activities and accountability in Turkey.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

- Regardless of the sector, many policies and projects are carried out, especially the National Employment Strategy and Action Plans 2014-2023 (NIS), in order to increase the employment of all women and remove the obstacles to their entry into the labour market.
- In order to create more and better job opportunities for women, the "Gender Equality Sensitive Employment Policies Project" with a budget of 361 thousand dollars is being implemented between 2019-2022.
- In order to support employability and entrepreneurship, the "Project on Supporting the Future of Decent Work Approach in the Focus of Gender Equality" with a budget of 8.8 million € is being implemented between 2020-2022. The project consists of two components: service and grant.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

- a) Within the scope of combating violence against women, there is an effective co-operation between institutions. Specialisation of institutions and organisations that provide direct services in combating violence against women and the establishment of special units in this context strengthen the aforementioned co-operation efforts. However, it is necessary to include specialised personnel in these units and ensure that these personnel continue to work in the same units.
- b) It is considered that the experiences of Turkey in the process of data integration efforts, the process of developing the risk analysis and management module, and the management process of the protocols and protocols signed for the purpose of raising awareness and training for the personnel in the relevant institutions and organisations can be a guide for other countries.

UKRAINE

Additional information

Objective 1. Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

Changes in legislation

In addition, on 4 March 2021, the Verkhovna Rada adopted in first reading a bill No. 3427 aimed at to combat sexism in the field of advertising.

The purpose of the bill fully complies with Ukraine's international obligations, the changes which proposed are:

- define the concepts of “discriminatory advertising” and “sex based discriminatory advertising”.
- strengthen liability for violations of advertising legislation.
- strengthen the protection of the rights of advertising consumers.

The Ministry of Social Policy approved guidelines on including in collective agreements provisions that aim to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men in labour relations. The document contains typical examples of discrimination based on sex, in particular concerning the following: (1) discriminatory job advertisements; (2) discrimination based on marital status or family responsibilities; (3) discrimination on multiple grounds (sex, age, marital status, disability, etc.); (4) discrimination based on appearance and on sexual harassment in the workplace; (5) sexism; and (6) unequal pay for work of equal value.

Other activities

The Ministry of Social Policy conducted the sociological research on manifestations of sexism towards female military personnel.

The educational human rights media campaign “Respect: Campaign against Sexism in Politics and Media” has been implemented. The website of the campaign was supported by the civil society organisation “Regional Press Development Institution” within the project “Ukraine: Advancement of Women in Political Leadership”.

Objective 4. Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Changes in policy

New gender quotas were applied at the local elections in 2020 and resulted in increased women’s representation in elected local authorities almost to 36% (in 2015 were 31% of women).

Objective 5. Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

Other activities

During 2020, the **Ministry of Social Policy** established the status of a human trafficking victim for 136 citizens (134 Ukrainian citizens, 2 foreigners), including 36 women, 98 men and 2 children (2 boys).

Domestic trafficking - 117 people, cross-border - 19 people.

Types of exploitation: 52 - labour, 5 - sexual, 2 - involvement in begging, 10 - involvement in criminal activities, 65 - use in armed conflicts.

The main destination countries are Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Germany, Turkey, Lebanon, UAE, Greece, and Belarus.

As of 4 January 2021, 1,459,022 internally displaced persons are registered.

Objective 6. Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

Changes in legislation

In 2020, the State Statistics Service, in close co-operation with interested users and producers of administrative data, has developed a list of indicators in the context of which data are collected to monitor gender equality.

This list was adopted by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1517 dated 2 December 2020.

Currently, the list contains 226 indicators, 104 of which will be formed by the State Statistics Service, the rest - by other public authorities and organisations.

In pursuance of this Resolution, the State Statistics Service will ensure the collection of data for the monitoring of gender equality and their publication on its official website, as well as will co-ordinate the work related to the development of relevant data for indicators.

The manifestation of the integrated inclusion of the gender component in Government policy was the approval by the Government on 16 December 2020 of the Action Plan for the implementation of the International Partnership Biarritz.

The action plan includes five key areas, namely:

- reforming legislation on social leave related to the birth and care of a child;
- development of inclusive and gender-sensitive public space, friendly to families with children and low mobility groups;
- cross-cutting integration of the gender component into the educational process;
- ensuring effective implementation of legislation in the field of combating domestic and gender-based violence;
- reducing the pay gap between women and men.

1. Strategic Objective Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

Changes in legislation

The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, together with the UN Women Ukraine, developed a project, and the Government approved the Gender Equality Communication Concept (Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1128 dated 16 September 2020). Implementation of the Strategy will contribute to the creation of conditions for overcoming gender stereotypes regarding professions and social roles.

The National Agency of Ukraine for Civil Service developed Order "On Approval of the QCCS Reporting Form 'Report on the Quantitative Composition of Civil Servants' and the Instruction on its Filling" No. 80-20 dated 20 May 2020 registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine under No. 484/34767 on 1 June 2020. The Order provides for the improvement of the procedure of collection and processing of information on the number of civil servants by sex and age group and by categories of civil service positions.

The Action Plan for the fulfilment of the Integrated Programme for implementation of gender approaches into the activities of the State Committee for Television and Radio-Broadcasting of Ukraine for 2019 has been approved and includes conducting outreach activities at the Ukrainian Institute of Advanced Training for TV & Radio Broadcast and the Press experts (UkrTeleRadioPressInstitute) with the inclusion of a training course for media workers "Gender Policy Basics for Mass Media", a training course for central executive bodies (CEBs) "Gender Content Fundamentals", workshops for employees of the State Committee for Television and Radio-Broadcasting and subordinate organisations.

Other activities

In order to respond to complaints and appeals of citizens on the grounds of gender discrimination, an advisory office operates at the Ministry of Social Policy – the **Expert Council on the Prevention and Combating of Gender-Based Discrimination**.

During the period of 2019-2020, the Expert Council on the Prevention and Combating of Gender-Based Discrimination has received 24 appeals for expert evaluation of discrimination, and 17 advertisements were thus withdrawn following the consideration of appeals. There are 7 lawsuits related to advertisements filed in court.

On the initiative of the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy K. Levchenko and with the support of the UNFPA in Ukraine, the photo exhibition **“Swedish Dads”** was held in November 2019. The photo exhibition had its locations at the Boryspil international airport, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

Also, on the initiative of the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy K. Levchenko and in the co-operation with the International Institute of Education, Culture and Diaspora Relations (IECDR), an exhibition dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the World Federation of Ukrainian Women’s Organisations (WFUWO) and the history of the Ukrainian Women’s Movement in the XX-XXI centuries was held in the premises of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 11-22 November 2019.

The purpose of the exhibition is to spread knowledge about WFUWO and Ukrainian Women’s Movement in Ukrainian society and abroad and to integrate them into the cultural and educational space of Ukraine, to popularise the activities of WFUWO as an important part of the International Women’s Movement and an integral part of the world Ukrainianness.

The Ministry of Social Policy, in conjunction with the United Nations Population Fund in Ukraine, conducts an **information campaign “4 Hands Happiness”**, which aims to overcome the stereotypes of traditional family responsibilities that are deeply rooted in Ukrainian society. Public service announcements involving famous football players with their children (city lights, billboards and subway lights) are posted in Ukrainian oblasts. (https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B0ltEy_j4OeDYjBTaFptZVpqbTQ).

The campaign information website is available at <http://zags.org.ua>

The Ministry of Social Policy in pursuance of the State Programme on Providing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men until 2021 approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 273 dated 11 April 2018 prepared and published a public social announcement video “You are the source of change!” The video is aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes, counteracting gender-based discrimination, in particular with regard to women experiencing multiple discrimination; the video is posted on the official website of the Ministry of Social Policy, social networks and video hosting YouTube.

In 2019, the National School of Judges of Ukraine, in co-operation with the Ukrainian-Canadian Support to Judicial Reform Project, began developing an educational course (in the form of training) titled “Overcoming gender stereotypes” for candidates for the post of judge.

The development of the course involved seven judges from different jurisdictions and instances, including the Supreme Court, in particular three women and four men. Based on the course training materials, an instructional guide was developed and prepared for instructing judges; the course is planned to be tested in the nearest future.

When developing the course, the following was taken into account: the Council of Europe's actions in this field aimed at supporting data collection and research of countering sexism, gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination; identifying, developing and disseminating good practices to eliminate gender stereotypes; and combating gender stereotypes affecting men and boys involving them and working with specific sectors, such as education.

Key challenges: countering the implementation of gender policy on the part of anti-gender movements.

2. Strategic Objective Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

Changes in legislation

The President of Ukraine signed a Decree "On urgent measures to prevent and combat domestic violence, gender-based violence, protection of the rights of victims of such violence" on 21 September 2020.

Changes in policy

Amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, which entered into force in 2019 and is aimed at forming an effective system for preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence in accordance with the standards of the Istanbul Convention has its result in the development of a strategy to protect the rights of women and girls to a life free of the violence which is based on an absolutely new philosophy of relations between the state and the individual and meets basic international standards.

The amendments broaden the range of individuals the violence between whom is considered domestic violence; broaden the list of actors engaged in activities to prevent and counter domestic and gender-based violence and broaden their powers; provide for broad public involvement in this process. The range of responsible actors has been broadened: health care, education, justice, judiciary systems have been engaged; the role of law enforcement bodies and social services have been strengthened. These innovations have created conditions for effective prevention of violence and systematic development of a network of modern specialised services for victims.

Other activities

Structural units of regional and Kyiv City State Administration, which are responsible for the implementation of measures to prevent and combat domestic violence, recorded **96,358 appeals** in the first half of 2020 (52.2% more than in the same period of the last year (63,316 appeals)), which is indicative of a positive trend in women's, men's, and children's understanding of violation of their rights and increased confidence in government authorities:

- 836 appeals were received from children, which is 0.9% of the total number;
- 84,031 appeals were received from women, which is 87.2% of the total number;
- 11,491 appeals were received from men, which is 11.9% of the total number.

Also, 262 appeals about domestic violence against persons with disabilities were recorded.

In February 2020, the Government **15-47 hotline** on combating human trafficking, preventing and combating domestic violence, gender-based violence and violence against children was launched. As of 1 November 2020, **8,859** appeals were received. In particular, over 5,014 were from women, 785 – from men, and 2,441 were related to violence against children or against mothers in front of a child. The national hotline for the prevention of domestic violence, human trafficking, and gender discrimination based at the **La Strada Ukraine** NGO continues to operate. During the period from 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020, **20,178** calls came on the hotline.

As of 1 September 2020, social services, including temporary shelter for people in difficult circumstances, in particular, due to sexual violence against them, are provided by:

- 21 psychosocial support centres;
- 28 shelters or departments for victims of domestic violence and/or gender-based violence;
- 396 psychosocial support mobile teams for victims of domestic violence and/or gender-based violence;
- 2 centres for medical and social rehabilitation of victims;
- 11 daycare centres for victims;
- 116 oblast, city, district hotlines on preventing and combating domestic violence.

The National Police of Ukraine established 45 domestic violence response mobile teams.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, with the participation of the National Police, created the **chatbot #ActAgainstViolence** (https://t.me/police_helpbot) in Telegram and Viber, which accumulates all the information for citizens on preventing and combating domestic violence. The website of the National Police was complemented with a tab containing information on combating and preventing domestic violence, a safety plan for the victim and the possibility to submit an online notification about domestic violence.

The National School of Judges of Ukraine (NSJ) has introduced a training course “Peculiarities of Consideration of Domestic Violence Cases” into the training process for judges. The course was developed by the NSJ in co-operation with the La Strada Ukraine NGO pursuant to subparagraph 9 of paragraph 96 of the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy up to 2020 approved by Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1393-p dated 23 November 2015. The course has been successfully implemented into the training process of judges, in particular, 14 training courses have been conducted in Dnipro Regional Department of the NSJ (3), Odesa Regional Department of the NSJ (2), Kharkiv Regional Department of the NSJ (5), Chernivtsi Regional Department of the NSJ (3), Lviv Regional Department of the NSJ (1).

Also, the National School of Judges of Ukraine, together with the La Strada Ukraine NGO, developed a training course “Peculiarities of consideration of criminal proceedings with regard to gender-based crimes” and prepared a pool of instructing judges to teach this course.

In addition, in 2020, the NSJ, in co-operation with the Ukrainian-Canadian Support to Judicial Reform Project, began developing an educational course (in the form of training) “Peculiarities of consideration of criminal proceedings related to domestic violence”.

Target group: actors involved in preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence, persons affected by gender-based and domestic violence, and the population

3. Strategic Objective Ensure the equal access of women to justice

Changes in legislation

The Law of Ukraine “On Free Legal Aid” has been amended. Pursuant to the amendments, persons who have suffered from domestic or gender-based violence are entitled to free secondary legal aid (protection; representation of the interests of persons entitled to free secondary legal aid in courts, other state bodies, local self-government bodies, other persons; drafting of procedural documents).

Other activities

The implementation of the “Family Counsellor” project is in progress, as part of which lawyers provide free secondary legal aid, including on domestic violence. Family counsellors co-operate with lawyers of the free legal aid system, specialists of the state executive service of the Ministry of Justice, employees of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, the National Police, psychologists, etc.

Thanks to the Legal Aid co-ordination Centre and Secondary Legal Aid Centres, and with the support of the Ukrainian-Canadian Project “Quality and Accessible Legal Aid in Ukraine”, the Free Legal Aid System Library has been supplemented by the guide “Women’s Health in Ukraine: Rights, Opportunities and Recommendations” and the reference book “Organisations and Institutions that Provide Assistance and Advice to Women in Health” The guide will help women become more aware of their health rights and opportunities, increase women’s ability to assert their rights to maintain and save their own health.

([https:// www.legalaid.gov.ua/images/docs/2019/Women_health_200x250_block.pdf](https://www.legalaid.gov.ua/images/docs/2019/Women_health_200x250_block.pdf)).

The reference book “Organisations and Institutions that Provide Assistance and Advice to Women in Health” contains relevant contact information about healthcare institutions, public organisations, charitable foundations, etc., the purpose of which is to protect rights and provide support and assistance in the field of health care. The reference book revolves, inter alia, around those institutions and organisations that provide such support and assistance to women. (https://www.legalaid.gov.ua/images/docs/2019/Dovidnik_zdorovya_in_print.pdf).

As of 1 October 2019, there are **more than 3,000 remote points** of access to free legal aid in the territory of Ukraine.

The HELP distance course “Access of Women to Justice” was completed by 26 judges.

The study of the General Recommendation No. 33 on women’s access to justice (CEDAW/C/GC/33) was included in the training course for trainers and gender co-ordinators which is called “Gender equality through the lens of non-discrimination in the light of the practice of the European Court of Human Rights” and developed and conducted under the co-operation between the National School of Judges and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. The training programme provided for the processing of General Recommendation No. 33 and the definition by participants of which recommendations, in their opinion, are the most relevant for Ukraine and why, which recommendations can be implemented as quickly as possible, and what steps/measures can be planned to implement these recommendations.

Target group: women, girls, persons affected by domestic and gender-based violence.

4. Strategic Objective Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Change in policy

On 19 December 2019, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the **Election Code of Ukraine**, which contains provisions providing for the formation of electoral lists taking into account gender representation quotas in the elections of people’s deputies of Ukraine and in local elections.

Thus, when forming the national and regional electoral lists for elections of people’s deputies of Ukraine, single and regional electoral lists for local elections, a political party (organisation of a political party) must ensure the presence of men and women (at least two candidates of each sex) in every five (places from the first to the fifth, from the sixth to the tenth, etc.) of each electoral list (paragraph 12 of Article 154, paragraph 9 of Article 219 of the Election Code).

The National tasks of Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 5) include the task of “Ensuring equal opportunities for representation at all levels of decision-making in political and public life”. The Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 722/2019 dated 30 October 2019 “On the Sustainable Development Goals” sets out the steady achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On Approval of Indicators for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030” No. 686-p dated 21 August 2019 approved 182 indicators and 76 targets that provide a solid basis for further comprehensive

monitoring of the country and create conditions for streamlining data collection for monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the 9th convocation, the share of women is 20.52% and is the highest since 1991. In 1991, there were 3.5% of women in Parliament. The representation of women in the new Government has also increased. In 2019 - 33%, in 2018 - 22%.

Other activities

The National Agency for Civil Service, together with the Centre for Adaptation of the Civil Service to the Standards of the European Union and the Ukrainian School of Government, with the support and assistance of the Support to Ukraine's Reforms for Governance (SURGe) Project, has developed a general short-term professional development programme "Integration of gender mainstreaming in the development of regulatory legal acts" approved by Order of the NACS "On Approval of General Professional Development Programmes" No. 133/20 dated 27 July 2020. Also, during July-September 2020, the NACS, together with the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, the Centre for Adaptation of the Civil Service to the Standards of the European Union and the Ukrainian School of Government, with the support of the Support to Ukraine's Reforms for Governance (SURGe) Project, carries out online training of public servants under the above programme.

Public awareness campaigns are conducted in order to overcome stereotypes about the role of women and men in politics, to encourage women to participate in politics.

In particular, there is an on-going practise of conducting **Leadership Schools for women candidates for local council deputies**, which includes training in strategic planning, project management, developing communication skills as a tool for organisational development, and training in debate skills. Theoretical knowledge is put into practice. In 2019, such Leadership Schools operated in 15 oblasts of Ukraine.

There is also a positive trend among local councils that join the **European Charter for Equality of Women and Men** at the local level. In 2017-2020, 80 local councils made a corresponding decision. This is especially important in view of the decentralisation reform being implemented in Ukraine.

Target group: women who lead or are members of political parties, leaders and members of NGOs, government officials.

5. Strategic Objective Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

Changes in legislation

The State Migration Policy Strategy of Ukraine until 2025 was approved by the Government Ordinance No. 482-p dated 12 July 2017. This document is mainly aimed at reducing administrative barriers to freedom of movement in Ukraine, creating necessary conditions for the return and reintegration of Ukrainian migrants into Ukrainian society, promoting legal migration in Ukraine, co-ordinated with social policy and economic development of the country.

The Action Plan for 2018-2020 for the implementation of the State Migration Policy Strategy of Ukraine until 2025 is approved by Government Ordinance No. 602-p dated 29 August 2018.

Statistical data show that the number of female protection seekers is less than the number of male protection seekers. Over seven months of 2020, the Temporary Accommodation Centres for Refugees (hereinafter – TAC) in the city of Odesa, Zakarpattia Oblast and the town of Yahotyn of Kyiv Oblast hosted 273 persons (87 men, 67 women, 119 children).

The number of persons broken down by TAC:

- TAC in the city of Odesa hosted 103 persons (41 men, 23 women, 39 children);

- TAC in Zakarpattia Oblast hosted 72 persons (29 men, 18 women, 25 children);
- TAC in the town of Yahotyn of Kyiv Oblast hosted 98 persons (17 men, 26 women, 55 children).

Changes in policy

The Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 909-p dated 15 November 2017 approved the Strategy for Integration of Internally Displaced Persons and Implementation of Long-Term Solutions for Internal Displacement for the Period up to 2020.

The aim of the Strategy is the socio-economic integration of internally displaced persons, taking into account the gender aspect, and the implementation of long-term solutions in order to exercise and protect their rights, freedoms and legitimate interests.

Implementation of the Action Plan for the realisation of the Strategy for Integration of Internally Displaced Persons and Implementation of Long-Term Solutions for Internal Displacement is in progress

Other activities

During the first half of 2020, the **Ministry of Social Policy** established the status of a human trafficking victim for 127 citizens (125 Ukrainian citizens, 2 foreigners), including 33 women, 92 men and 2 children (2 boys).

Domestic trafficking - 107 people, cross-border - 18 people.

Types of exploitation: 48 - labour, 5 - sexual, 2 - involvement in begging, 9 - involvement in criminal activities, 63 - use in armed conflicts.

The main destination countries are Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Germany, Turkey, Lebanon, UAE, Greece, and Belarus.

As of 10 November 2020, 1,458,050 internally displaced persons are registered.

Target group: migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls (including internally displaced persons).

6. Strategic Objective Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

Changes in legislation

The Commission for co-ordination of Interaction of Executive Bodies to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men was established by Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 784 dated 2 September 2020, the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine **Olha Stefanishyna** was appointed as the Head of the Commission and the Government Commissioner on Gender Equality Policy **Kateryna Levchenko** – as the Deputy Head of the Commission.

The Model Regulations on the Department Responsible for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men and the Model Regulations on the Advisor on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, Preventing and Combating Gender-based Violence (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 930 dated 9 October 2020) were approved.

In October 2020, the Government of Ukraine approved the Second National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security until 2025.

Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 505 dated 6 May 2020 confirmed the accession of Ukraine to the international gender equality initiative Biarritz Partnership initiated by O. Zelenska.

Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1133 dated 19 September 2020 confirmed the intentions of Ukraine to join the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC).

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted the Ordinance on the participation of the Government of Ukraine in the international initiative Generation Equality Action Coalition (No. 1277 dated 21 October 2020).

Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 274 dated 25 March 2020 conferred the responsibilities for the implementation of the state policy on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men and the co-ordination of interaction between central executive authorities in the context of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, as in previous governments, on the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine.

The Ministry of Social Policy has adopted:

- Decree No. 257 dated 14 April 2020 "On the Approval of Methodical Recommendations for Assessing the Gender Impact of Sectoral Reforms".
- Decree No. 56 dated 29 January 2020 "On the Approval of Methodical Recommendations for Introducing Provisions Aimed at Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in Labour Relations into Collective Agreements and Contracts".
- Decree No. 86 dated 7 February 2020 "On the Approval of the Instruction for the Integration of Gender Mainstreaming in the Development of Regulatory Legal Acts".

Changes in policy

Pursuant to Article 12 of the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men", Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine was appointed as an authorised person (co-ordinator) for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, preventing and combating gender-based violence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, which was approved by Decree of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine No. 891 dated 24 October 2019.

Deputy Head of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine was appointed as an authorised person (co-ordinator) for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, preventing and combating gender-based violence of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, which was approved by Decree of the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine "On the Distribution of Responsibilities of Senior Staff of the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine" No. 117 dated 27 December 2019.

The position of Assistant to the Head of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine on Gender Issues was introduced into the staff of the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine by Decree of the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine No. 68/ДЧК dated 31 October 2019. The position of Assistant to the Chancellor of the National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine on Gender Issues was introduced into the staff of the National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine named after Bohdan Khmelnytskyi by Decree of the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine No. 38/ДЧК dated 15 April 2020. Part-time Assistants on Gender Issues were appointed in the relevant structural units and tasks related to ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women were included in their job descriptions by Ordinance of the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine "On the Organisation of the Activities of Part-time Assistants on Gender Issues." No. 56 dated 3 March 2020. In total, 44 women and men were appointed.

The Ministry of Finance, in co-operation with other ministries at central and regional level, continues the process of analysing budgetary programmes for gender mainstreaming. As part of this work, the oblast state administrations analyse local budget programmes for their gender component.

The steps taken are the result of the successful and partnership work of the Gender Budgeting in Ukraine Project, funded by Sweden and implemented by a consortium of international organisations in partnership with ministries and agencies: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Policy, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, State Statistics Service of Ukraine, as well as of the Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (specific-related and budget), and oblast state administrations. The main partner of the project is the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine.

The State Employment Service ensures the provision of information and consulting services related to employment, searching for a suitable job, vocational guidance and vocational training, assistance in the establishment of entrepreneurial activities. All employment centres and branches have been equipped with installed touch screens with job databases, computers with free access to job search websites, including the state employment service portal, which formed a nationwide job database.

The State Employment Service of Ukraine continuously conducts information and practical activities to increase women's access to decent work, provide vocational guidance and raise the competitiveness in the labour market: lectures, training, classes, for example, on topics such as "Woman in the labour market", which takes into account gender aspects of employment and reviews the women's position in the current job market, the issues of defining career plan, building a job search strategy, and more. The purpose of such activities is to increase women's legal awareness of the exercise and protection of their rights in employment. Specialists in employment law, financial and tax matters, pensions, entrepreneurs, lawyers, etc. are involved in the activities.

Also, the employment centres offer women individual professional advice in order to choose or change their profession, refer to vocational training, start their own business. Pursuant to the law, vocational training is organised at the request of the employer or for self-employment, the entrepreneurial activity in accordance with the wishes of those unemployed is conducted in vocational and higher educational institutions, enterprises, establishments and organisations regardless of ownership, type of activity and management. Such training is organised at the expense of the Compulsory State Social Insurance Fund of Ukraine for unemployment.

Other activities

Gender budgeting is still being implemented under the Gender Budgeting in Ukraine Project (GRB Project) funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). During 2019-2020, an online course on gender budgeting was conducted for representatives of structural subdivisions of oblast state administrations and officials of local self-government, as of 1 November 2020 more than 2,000 people attended the training.

The co-ordination Working Group on Gender Sensitive Budgeting in Ukraine held three meetings during 2019-2020, at which representatives of central and local executive authorities, together with the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, discussed gender gaps and inequalities identified as a result of gender budget analysis of selected programmes, shared their experience in the implementation of the gender budgeting in the oblasts and shared successful results.

During April and May 2020, the State Border Guard Service conducted training courses on the application of gender-oriented approach when forming passports of budget programmes, which were organised by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine together with the NIRAS SwedenAB consortium, as part of the implementation of the Memorandum of co-operation on the application of the gender-oriented approach in the budget process.

The National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine delivers a specialised discipline on gender policy. Gender Policy is included in the curriculum of advanced training courses. Every year, 3,000-3,500 civil servants undergo advanced training.

The National School of Judges, together with the Ukrainian-Canadian Support to Judicial Reform Project, has developed a training course “Gender aspects of the activities of judges elected to administrative positions in the courts”. In 2020, the training course was conducted for the presidents of courts of Cherkasy and Kyiv Oblasts (online, 17 July 2020).

The National School of Judges, in co-operation with the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, conducted a number of training courses for instructing judges and gender co-ordinators titled “Gender equality through the lens of non-discrimination in the light of the practice of the European Court of Human Rights”, namely on 8-12 July 2019 (Kozyn), which was attended by 15 persons, and online on 10-12 June 2020 with the participation of 18 persons (10 women and 8 men). On 19-21 August 2020, an in-depth training course was held, which was attended by 12 judges who are gender co-ordinators (6 women and 6 men).

Target group: civil servants, women, men, girls, boys