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Beijing + 15:

The Platform for Action and the European Union

Report from the Swedish Presidency of
the Council of the European Union

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I Introduction

The official document adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 is called the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace (PfA).

The PfA is an agenda for women's empowerment that reaffirms the fundamental principle whereby the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. As an agenda for action, the platform seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle.

The PfA respects and values the full diversity of women's situations and conditions and recognises that some women face particular barriers to their empowerment. The PfA recognises that broad based and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development is necessary to sustain social development and social justice.

A thorough review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been carried out twice: at the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2000 (Beijing + 5) and at the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2005 (Beijing + 10). The review and appraisal by the CSW in 2005 identified achievements, gaps and challenges and provided an indication of areas where further actions and initiatives were most urgently needed.

Following the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Madrid European Council (December 1995) requested an annual review of the implementation in the Member States of the Beijing Platform for Action. Since 1999, sets of quantitative and qualitative indicators have been developed by subsequent Presidencies in 9 of the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action.

In 2010 at its 54th Session, the Commission on the Status of Women will review the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realisation of the Millennium Development Goals.

The present report *Beijing + 15: The Platform for Action and the European Union* is the third review of development at the EU-level in relation to the

12 critical areas of concern of the PfA, building on the follow-up by the EU in 2000 and on the report from the Luxembourg Presidency in 2005.

The report is based on the Council Conclusions on the follow-up of the Beijing PfA since 2005 and on information provided by the Member States in their answers to the UNECE questionnaire sent out in January 2009. Furthermore, Statistics Sweden has updated the statistics in some of the critical areas for this report.

The report is divided into six sections. After the introduction (Part I), there is a description of the development of gender mechanisms at institutional level within the European Union. (Part II). In Part III the report describes the development of institutional gender mechanisms in the Member States as well as the development of indicators in this particular critical area of concern (H).

Part IV analyses developments within the Member States in respect of the eleven critical areas of concern. In Part V, more general comments on the development concerning the twelve areas of concern are presented.

In the last section (Part VI) the challenges of implementing and following up the development at EU level within the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing PfA are presented.

This report has been realised under the supervision of the Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality in Sweden and Director Marianne Laxén has been responsible for its compilation. The following researchers have contributed to Parts III, IV and V: Maria Eriksson PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology at Uppsala University, Lenita Freidenvall PhD, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science at Stockholm University, Annica Kronsell PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science at Lund University, Anita Nyberg Professor, Centre for Gender Studies at Stockholm University, Malin Rönnblom PhD, Assistant Professor in Gender Studies at Umeå University and Barbro Wijma Professor, Division of Gender and Medicine at Linköping University. The report has been circulated to the Member States for comment.

II Developments at institutional level of the European Union

2.1 GENDER EQUALITY MECHANISMS

2.1.1 General context

The European Union has been pursuing the goal of equal treatment of women and men for over half a century. The EC Treaty, signed by the six founding countries of the European Economic Community (EEC) in Rome in 1957, enshrined the right to equal pay for equal work for men and women.

Since then, the EEC has grown into a European Union of 27 countries. Men's and women's rights to equal treatment and non-discrimination have evolved too.

Article 2 of the EC Treaty provides that the promotion of equality between men and women is a task of the European Community. Article 3(2) provides that the Community should aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality between men and women in all its activities (gender mainstreaming). There are three legal bases in the EC Treaty for EU legislation on equal treatment of men and women: Article 141(3) concerning matters of employment and occupation; Article 13(1) on sex discrimination outside of the employment field; and Article 137 with respect to the promotion of employment, and improved living and working conditions.

Today, EC gender equality law forms a central pillar of equal opportunities policy in Europe. Thirteen European Directives have been adopted in the field of equal treatment between women and men. These acts are legally binding for all the EU Member States, which must incorporate them into their national legislation. The legislation covers the right to equal treatment for men and women in the areas of work, pay and social security and for access to goods and services. They provide special protection to pregnant women and those who have recently given birth, and attempt to establish common standards for women who are self-employed and helping spouses.

2.1.2 Structures for Gender Equality

The European Union is built on an institutional system where Member States delegate competences for certain matters to independent institutions, representing the interests of the Union as a whole. The following actors collaborate to deliver the objective of gender equality:

- the Commission, which is the guardian of the Treaties and a de facto executive body within which policy initiatives originate
- the Council, within which each Member State government is represented
- the European Parliament, which is directly elected by citizens across the Member States; and
- the European Court of Justice which makes rulings on gender equality and on the implementation of Community law.

The European Union has developed several structures to ensure the advancement of gender equality.

The European Commission

The Group of Commissioners on Fundamental Rights, Anti-discrimination and Equal Opportunities has the mandate to drive policy and ensure the coherence of Commission action in the areas of fundamental rights, anti-discrimination, equal opportunities and the social integration of minority groups and to ensure that gender equality is taken into account in Community policies and actions, in accordance with Article 3(2) of the Treaty.

The Inter-service Group on Gender Equality created in 1995 brings together representatives from all Commission Directorates General. Its main task is to develop a gender mainstreaming approach in all European Commission policies and programmes and to contribute to and coordinate activities within the framework of the annual work programme on gender equality prepared by the European Commission services.

The Unit "Equality between Men and Women", Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, contributes to the drive to eliminate inequalities and promotes gender equality throughout the EC through the promotion of an integrated approach to gender equality, encompassing both gender mainstreaming in all policy areas and specific measures. Its action is complemented by the Unit "Equality, Action against Discrimination: Legal Questions", which is responsible for ensuring compliance with the existing gender equality Directives.

The following bodies are active under the coordination of the Unit "Equality between Men and Women":

- The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men assists the European Commission in formulating and implementing the Community's activities aimed at promoting equal opportunities for women

and men. It is composed of representatives of the Member States from ministries or bodies having specific responsibility for equal opportunities between women and men, of members representing employers' and workers' organisations at Community level, and of representatives of European NGOs and international/professional organisations as observers. Governmental representatives of countries of the European Economic Area also participate in the Committee as observers.

- The High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming is an informal group of high-level MS representatives responsible for gender mainstreaming at national level. The Group is also the main forum for planning the strategic follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, including the development of indicators. The Group also assists the European Commission in the preparation of the Report on Equality between Women and Men to the European Council.

Under the coordination of the Unit "*Equality, Action against Discrimination: Legal Questions*" Directorate General Employment, Social affairs and Equal Opportunities the following body is active:

- *A network* of equality bodies seeking to promote the uniform implementation of Community law in the field of equal treatment of women and men and to encourage the exchange of best practices between national bodies and the European Commission (EQUINET).

The Regulation establishing a *European Institute for Gender Equality* was adopted in December 2006. The main objective of the Institute shall be to contribute to the promotion of gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all Community policies and the resulting national policies, by providing technical assistance to the Community institutions, in particular the Commission and the authorities of the Member States. The Institute is in the process of being set up. The Management Board was established in 2007 and the Director took up her duties in April 2009.

The European Parliament

The Committee on Women's rights and gender equality is responsible for:

1. The definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures;
2. the promotion of women's rights in third countries;

3. equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work;
4. the removal of all forms of discrimination based on sex;
5. the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors;
6. the follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women and
7. information policy on women.

The European Parliament High Level Group on Gender Equality was constituted in April 2004 and the most important task of this Group is to ensure that the European Parliament takes into account the issues of gender mainstreaming and equality between women and men in all the policy areas which are debated in its committees.

The Council of the EU

Member States' ministers responsible for Gender Equality meet in the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO). As regard the policy arena of gender equality the Council has in recent years mainly taken decisions concerning indicators relating to the Beijing Platform for Action.

The European Council

In March 2006 the European Council approved the European Pact for Gender Equality, in line with the Commission's Roadmap for Gender Equality, reflecting the Member States' commitment and determination to implement policies aimed at promoting gender equality.

At the request of the European Council, the European Commission reports each year on progress towards gender equality and presents challenges and priorities for the future through its annual Reports on Equality between Women and Men.

Partnership with civil society

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the European Women's Lobby and the social partners play an essential role in the promotion of gender equality by initiating debate and giving input to the Commission and other EU institutions.

2.2 GENDER EQUALITY LEGISLATION AND POLICY

2.2.1 Major legislative developments

In recent years, the “acquis communautaire” in the area of gender equality has been strengthened by the adoption of one Directive: 2006/54/EC.

This Directive recasts Directives 75/117/EEC, 76/207/EEC, 86/378/EEC, 96/97/EC, 97/80/EC and 2002/73/EC. The purpose of the Directive is to ensure the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation. To that end, it contains provisions to implement the principle of equal treatment in relation to: (a) access to employment, including promotion, and to vocational training; (b) working conditions, including pay; (c) occupational social security schemes.

New initiatives

In October 2008, the Commission adopted a package of measures on the reconciliation between work and family or private life, including in particular two legislative proposals to review two existing Directives (92/85/EC and 86/613/EEC).

The proposal to amend the Directive on the Protection of Pregnant Workers (92/85/EC) aims at providing longer leave, more flexibility and better payment during leave, thus giving higher protection and also improving reconciliation facilities.

The main points are:

- an extension of the duration of maternity leave from the current provision of 14 weeks to 18 weeks.
- the principle of full remuneration during the 18 weeks, with a possibility for the Member States to introduce a ceiling that should not be below sickness pay;
- the right for women coming back from maternity leave to ask for flexible work arrangements. The employer must examine such a demand but has no obligation to accept;
- increases in flexibility for women to decide when they begin their leave.

The proposal to review Directive 86/613/EEC aims at updating the Community legal framework concerning the application of the principle of equal treatment between women and men for self employed workers and their

spouses. This proposal will repeal Directive 86/613/EEC and be applicable as regards those aspects not covered by Directives 2006/54/EC, 2004/113/EC and 79/7/EEC, and aim to implement more effectively the principle of equal treatment between women and men engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity, or contributing to the pursuit of such an activity.

Finally, the European social partners (BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC) agreed in June 2009 on a revised Framework Agreement on Parental Leave. It would increase the existing right to take parental leave from three to four months per parent and apply it to all employees, regardless of their type of contract. The European social partners have jointly asked the Commission to call for its implementation by means of a proposed Council Directive.

2.2.2 Policy framework for equality between women and men

The European Commission's Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men (2006–2010)

In March 2006, the European Commission adopted a "Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men"¹ covering the period 2006–2010. This Roadmap outlines six priority areas for EU action on gender equality for the period 2006–2010: equal economic independence for women and men; reconciliation of private and professional life; equal representation in decision-making; eradication of all forms of gender-based violence; elimination of gender stereotypes; and promotion of gender equality in external and development policies. For each area, it identifies priority objectives and actions. The priorities outlined in the Commission's Roadmap are closely linked to the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This Roadmap represents the Commission's commitment to driving the gender equality agenda forward, in partnership with Member States and other actors.

The Roadmap builds on the experience of the Framework Strategy for equality between women and men² for the period 2001–2005. It reaffirms the dual approach based on gender mainstreaming (the promotion of gender equality in all policy areas and activities) and specific measures.

The European Commission monitors and assesses progress on the implementation of the Roadmap through an annual work programme. The mid-term report on the implementation of the Roadmap³ showed that progress had

1. COM(2006) 92 final

2. COM(2000) 335 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2000:0335:FIN:EN:PDF>

3. COM(2008) 760 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0760:FIN:EN:PDF>

been made, with equality objectives being included in some policies identified in the Roadmap. Nevertheless much remains to be done, in particular to implement gender mainstreaming in EC policies at all stages.

2.2.3 Financial resources for gender equality

The implementation of the Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men is supported financially, *inter alia*, by the Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (PROGRESS) 2007–2013. The Programme was established to support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. PROGRESS is composed of five policy sections: employment; social protection and inclusion; working conditions; antidiscrimination and diversity; and gender equality.

In addition, gender mainstreaming should be ensured in all policy areas of PROGRESS. Moreover, in accordance with the gender mainstreaming strategy, all financial programmes and instruments should contribute to the promotion of gender equality (Structural Funds, Framework Programme on Research and Technological Development; Educational programmes, programmes in the field of external relations and development cooperation etc.).

Nevertheless, it is still a challenge to know exactly how much Community funding is spent on gender equality policies. An external study on the feasibility of introducing gender budgeting into the EU budgetary process was finalised in 2008. Following on from this study the Commission has pursued further work on gender budgeting at the EU level, building on existing management, reporting and budgeting tools. The Commission has revised its budgetary guidelines for a better integration of a gender dimension into the Preliminary Draft Budget 2010 Activity Statements.

2.3 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

2.3.1 Gender mainstreaming in the European Employment Strategy

The revised Strategy for growth and jobs after 2005 and the European Employment Strategy

The Lisbon European Council in March 2000 launched a strategy aimed at sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and with long-term employment targets. Five years later the objectives of the Lisbon strategy were still far from being achieved. Therefore,

in 2005 the European Commission analysed the progress made and the remaining challenges and proposed a renewed strategy focused on “Growth and Jobs”⁴.

“Integrated guidelines” were adopted by the Council of the EU, covering the three main strands of the Lisbon strategy (macro, micro and employment).

From 2005, the Member States presented their main policy framework in the form of annual National Reform Programmes (NRPs) in order to respond to the “Renewed strategy for growth and jobs” in each of the three strands. The European Commission has been analysing those NRPs, in collaboration with the Council in the annual Joint Employment Report. Moreover, from the beginning of 2007 onwards, country-specific recommendations were proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council.

Gender equality and the employment guidelines

In the introductory section, the Employment Guidelines clearly mention that: “Equal opportunities and combating discrimination are essential for progress. Gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality should be ensured in all action taken”. Moreover, some guidelines are of particular importance to gender equality. Therefore, in the Integrated Guidelines 2005–08 (renewed for the period 2008–2010), gender equality has been on the one hand mentioned as a general principle (gender mainstreaming); on the other hand it is dealt with under specific policies, notably in Guideline 18 (Promote a life-cycle approach to work). Guideline 18 asked Member States to “promote a life-cycle approach to work” through *inter alia*: “resolute action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay” and “better reconciliation of work and private life and the provision of accessible and affordable childcare facilities and care for other dependants”. Quantitative targets have been set in these areas and repeated in the Employment Guidelines: the Lisbon European Council target of achieving a female employment rate of at least 60 %; and the Barcelona European Council targets of ensuring the provision of childcare to at least 90 % of children between three years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33 % of children under three years of age.

4. COM(2005) 24 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0024:FIN:EN:PDF>

Integration of gender issues in the European employment strategy process
Gender equality has been broadly taken into account in the activities in the field of the European employment strategy, notably the process of adopting and monitoring indicators or the Mutual Learning Process. Not many of the country-specific recommendations proposed by the Commission and adopted annually by the Council (from 2007), have addressed female employment but a number of so-called “points to watch” also addressed concerns of importance for gender equality (childcare, the gender pay gap, female participation in the labour market, gender segregation) for around half of the Member States.

In several annual Joint Employment reports, the European Commission and the Council jointly underlined that there was some progress in the way Member States were adopting a life-cycle approach to work, notably in terms of gender. However they also found gaps in the implementation of the gender mainstreaming principles:

- “Through the European Pact for Gender Equality, Member States were asked to include a perspective of gender equality when reporting on implementation. In spite of this, the promotion of female employment and systematic gender mainstreaming of policies are rarely emphasised”. (2006 Joint Employment Report.)
- “Progress in the field of gender equality has continued to be mixed. (...). Most countries are still far from adopting a full gender-mainstreaming approach to employment policies, notably through systematic gender impact assessment of policy measures”. (2009 Joint Employment Report.)

A detailed analysis of gender mainstreaming of employment policies was conducted by the Expert Group on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment (EGGSIE) in 2007⁵. It shows notably the limited visibility of gender in the National Reform Programmes since 2005 and the fact that the role and visibility of women’s employment and gender equality seems to be declining. Moreover, this report highlights some very positive developments at national level in the field of gender equality, yet notes that they are not reported in the National Reform Programmes by the Member States.

5. Gender mainstreaming of employment policies – A comparative review of thirty European countries – <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=126&furtherPubs=yes>
See also “The National reform Programmes 2008 and the gender aspects of the European employment strategy”.

Initiatives by the European Commission to improve gender equality on the labour market

In the period 2005–2009, the European Commission launched numerous initiatives to promote gender equality on the labour market:

- in July 2007 it adopted a Communication on the gender pay gap⁶ in order to analyse the issue, underline the complementary role of the EU and identify four domains of action, as well as launching an awareness-raising European campaign on the issue;
- it adopted a report on the implementation of the Barcelona targets concerning childcare facilities⁷ in order to recall the importance of the availability of quality and affordable childcare services, monitor the situation in all Member States and propose some actions to be taken at all levels;
- it presented a “Manual for gender mainstreaming employment, social inclusion and social protection policies”⁸ to the Member States in order to support the implementation by national actors of the gender mainstreaming principle.

Moreover, the gender mainstreaming principle was taken into account when preparing key Commission communications in the field of flexicurity, youth employment, “new skills for new jobs” and demographic challenges.

Gender statistics

Since 2005, systematic efforts have been devoted to improve the availability of specific statistics broken down by sex at the EU level – notably in the following domains:

- Childcare facilities: possibility of measuring progress towards achieving the Barcelona targets through EU-SILC;
- Time-use surveys :new common guidelines for the national time-use surveys and a European database containing all national time-use surveys from the period 1999–2004;
- The gender pay gap: improving the quality of the data used at EU level through the use of the EU Structure of Earnings Survey;

6. COM(2007)424 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0424:FIN:EN:PDF>

7. COM(2008)638 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0638:FIN:EN:PDF>

8. Manual for gender mainstreaming employment, social inclusion and social protection policies, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/booklets/equality/pdf/ke8108293_en.pdf in 21 EU languages

- Numerous publications on gender statistics, including a new publication of a general panorama of the “Life of women and men in Europe”;
- Reform of the ISCO (occupations) nomenclature at international level, with gender being strengthened, for instance through more detailed categories for female-dominated occupations;
- Specific surveys (EU Labour force survey ad-hoc module on reconciliation between work and family life in 2005 and planned again for 2010).

Moreover, the Commission continues to collect comparable data at EU level on women and men in decision-making positions through its database on women and men in decision-making⁹.

2.3.2 Gender mainstreaming in the social inclusion/social protection process

Poverty is increasingly feminised and especially affects single mothers and elderly women. Gender inequalities however are also persistent in other groups facing social exclusion, such as immigrants, ethnic minorities and disabled people. This means that there are differences in the causes, extent, and form of social exclusion experienced by women and men.

Since 2000 one of the goals of the open method of coordination (OMC) for social inclusion has been to eliminate these inequalities. This OMC has required the Member States to submit National Action Plans to combat social exclusion and poverty and to promote the mainstreaming of equality between women and men in all actions taken, in particular by assessing the implications for both men and women at the different stages of the planning of, decision-making on, and monitoring of actions.

The OMC was extended to the field of pensions in 2001 and to the field of healthcare and long-term care in 2004, in both of which equality between women and men was then promoted from the start.

In order to create a stronger, more visible OMC in the social area, the European Commission set forth detailed proposals in 2005¹⁰ for simplified and synchronised reporting in the fields of social inclusion, pensions, health and long-term care. The aim was to create a heightened focus on policy implementation and closer interaction with the revised Lisbon Strategy. In particular, the Commission asked the Member States to provide forward-looking National Strategy Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, which address the specific challenges of each of these policy fields, based on common objectives

9. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=762&langId=en>

10. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0706:FIN:EN:PDF>

adopted by the European Council in March 2006¹¹. The promotion of equality between women and men was identified by the European Council as an overarching common objective of this process.

The first reports by the Member States in this cycle were submitted in the autumn of 2006 (covering 2006–2008) and the second reporting cycle took place in the autumn of 2008 (covering 2008–2010). The evaluation of the Member States' strategies has been published in the annual Joint Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion¹².

Findings from the first reporting cycle showed that overall, the Member States are incorporating some gender concerns in their policies and that data are broken down by sex more often than in the past, but there is still considerable room for improvement in ensuring that policy measures are better informed by gender considerations across all three strands of cooperation. In particular, many Member States see the main route out of poverty and exclusion by eliminating obstacles to parents', especially mothers', labour market participation. Measures to facilitate reconciliation of work and family life were thus often highlighted in Member States' National Strategy Reports, including improved access to quality childcare. However, broader gender equality issues, such as the need to promote a more equal sharing of domestic work and of care responsibilities, received attention only in a few reports, as did the potential role of ICT to facilitate reconciliation.

Key findings from the second reporting cycle indicated that gender considerations featured more than in the past but could be mainstreamed more consistently. In particular:

- for social inclusion, a number of measures tackled gender-specific problems (such as labour market integration, child poverty, lone parenthood, and flexible forms of work) which were likely to benefit women, but a general tendency was that these problems had not always been analysed from a gender perspective, nor were the measures necessarily
- aimed at increasing gender equality. Nevertheless, almost half of the Member States acknowledged the specific problems faced by women, and proposed measures aimed at directly helping them. Some have also designed specific measures to help immigrant women and one Member State proposed improving the specific situation of Roma women.

11. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/common_objectives_en.htm

12. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/joint_reports_en.htm

- for pensions, many Member States reported significant wage gaps between employed men and women. The Joint Report underlined that though substantially reduced, the resulting gender gaps in retirement income are set to persist. It underlined that a proposed solution to the problem was the equalisation of the pension eligibility ages for men and women, but that constant efforts would be needed to achieve gender equality on the labour market and in the distribution of care burdens. It would also be important to monitor the effects of policies whereby replacement incomes and pension entitlements were given for care-related absences from the labour market in order to prevent such forms of protection from becoming new dependency traps.
- for healthcare and long-term care, gender mainstreaming was applied only in rare cases.

In addition, several activities/initiatives of the Commission in the social inclusion/social protection domain promoted gender equality in 2005–2009. These include the following: *peer review seminars* on minimum incomes and older women's poverty¹³ and on the return of women to the labour market; a manual on gender mainstreaming employment, social inclusion and social protection policies; expert network reports on gender inequalities and the risks of poverty and social exclusion and on ethnic minority and Roma women, each covering 30 European countries¹⁴; a study on lone parent households; and the promotion of gender equality in Commission *communications*, such as on active inclusion¹⁵ and in Commission *Staff Working Papers*, such as on Roma inclusion¹⁶. It is also planned to promote gender mainstreaming in the activities of the European Year on Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010¹⁷.

2.3.3 Gender mainstreaming in the European Structural Funds

During the new programming period 2007–2013, the *Regulation for the European Regional Development Fund*, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund dedicates a specific article (Art. 16) to “Equality between men and women and

13. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/docs/spsi_gpa/spsi_gpa_7_minimum_incomes.pdf

14. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=748&langId=en>

15. The common principles and guidelines have been endorsed by the Council in its conclusions of 17.12.2008 “on common active inclusion principles to combat poverty more effectively”.

16. SEC(2008)2172 – Community Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion

17. Decision N° 1098/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council adopted on 22 October 2008.

non discrimination”. This Article, laying down general provisions for the Structural Funds, states that the Member States and the Commission shall ensure that equality between women and men and the integration of the gender perspective is promoted during the various stages of implementing the funds.

In particular, Articles 2 and 4(5) of the *European Social Fund Regulation* refer to the promotion of gender equality. Article 3(b)(iii) specifies “mainstreaming and specific action to improve access to employment and increase sustainable participation and progress of women in employment, and to eliminate direct and indirect gender-based segregation in the labour market inter alia by addressing the root causes of the gender pay gaps”. Article 6 requests Member States to promote, in their operational programmes, gender equality and equal opportunities and to include a description of how this is organised throughout the policy cycle, i.e. in preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In addition Article 10 contains an obligation for Member States to report on the implementation of gender mainstreaming and on any gender-specific action.

Gender equality issues are cross-cutting principles applicable to all ESF priorities. However, making gender equality exclusively a cross-cutting principle risks overlooking the need for positive actions. Taking gender mainstreaming seriously therefore means adopting a combination of both. In this framework, the programming strategy of the Member States should integrate gender mainstreaming into every step of policy processes, and should be applied as a cross-cutting, horizontal principle, incorporating the gender dimension into all stages of the programming, implementation and evaluation process.

To ensure that the Member States implement those provisions, the “Community strategic guidelines on Cohesion” were adopted on 6 October 2006 and a “Framework for integrating the principle of Gender Equality in the new ESF programmes” has also been drawn up. In addition, to reinforce the partnership regarding this subject, *the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming in the Structural Funds* has been meeting regularly since 2004. The members of the Group are high-level officials from the Managing Authorities of all the Member States of the European Union. The High Level Group contributes to the development of tools and mechanisms to integrate the gender dimension at every stage of the regional and cohesion policy process. It acts as a network to give input on gender mainstreaming to the authorities managing the Structural Funds. Nevertheless, many challenges remain to be solved before gender mainstreaming is effectively implemented in the Structural Funds.

2.3.4 Gender mainstreaming in selected policy areas

Science and Research policies

The instrument with which the Commission funds scientific research and technological development, the Seventh Framework Programme, takes gender equality into account. It also promotes gender analysis of the research content. A training toolkit has been prepared and events organised to raise awareness in the scientific community about the gender aspects of the various scientific domains.

Projects are funded to identify best practices in gender management in research institutions. The training of national contact points will start in 2009. The report “Mapping the maze: Getting more women to the top in research” has reviewed positive actions and gender equality measures at institutional and national level. In addition, data on the female research workforce in universities broken down by gender (‘She Figures’) are regularly updated.

In the public research sector, the European Union has set a target of 25 % for women in leading positions.¹⁸ This target has been translated into a series of actions to promote women to the top (mentoring, networking, training programmes). Women’s career trends have been analysed, in particular through work by experts on decision-making in the research field. A report on selection procedures for the allocation of research funds has been published (Gender challenge in research funding).

External relations policy

The European Commission is committed to contributing to the development and implementation of the EU’s external policy on women’s rights. In recent years, the EU has continued to systematically discuss issues related to women’s rights with its partner countries and partner organisations, in particular in the context of EU human rights dialogues and consultations, including in dedicated sub-committees on democracy and human rights.

In 2009, the EU adopted Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them.

These guidelines prioritise the subject of women’s rights in EU human rights policy in third countries and provide guidance on the way the EU reacts to specific individual cases of human rights violations.

Over the years, the EU has assisted the Mediterranean partner countries in promoting equality between women and men. The implementation of the

18. Council of 18.4.2005.

2006 Istanbul Conclusions on “Strengthening the role of women in society” are regularly discussed by Euromed participants and a stock-taking Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference should take place in 2009.

Guidelines for the improvement of women’s status and situation in the Euro-Mediterranean area were developed by the inclusion of specific recommendations in the five-year work plan adopted at the Barcelona Summit of Heads of State and Government in November 2005¹⁹.

The EU is committed to contributing to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The Resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian responses and post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

The EU is working in substantive terms towards the 10th anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325. In this respect, the Commission and the Council Secretariat have jointly elaborated a Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security.

Apart from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), and the thematic programme Investing in People, which both include the equal participation of men and women as an important objective, in April 2007, the European Commission jointly with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITC-ILO), launched the EC/UN Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace: this programme seeks to build a capacity of relevant actors and improve accountability for gender equality in 12 focus countries.

Enlargement policy

Enlargement policy has led candidate countries and potential candidate countries to align themselves with the *acquis communautaire* and European standards on equality and to create appropriate institutional and administrative structures.

Technical assistance was provided in 2008 to candidate countries and

19. http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcmvue.cec.eu.int:8080/external_relations/euromed/summit1105/five_years_en.pdf

potential candidate countries to align themselves with the *acquis communautaire* on gender equality. A seminar on gender equality was held in Turkey, and a study tour on women in business was organised for civil society organisations from the Western Balkans dealing with non-discrimination and gender equality. The yearly progress reports also addressed gender issues and will be continued in 2009. It is planned that accession negotiations on the negotiating chapter “Social policy and employment”, also covering equal opportunities, will be provisionally closed with Croatia and opened with Turkey in 2009, provided that the necessary conditions are met.

Development cooperation

Gender equality, which involves equal rights and equal opportunities for all, is crucial for poverty reduction and for sustainable democratic development. However, the achievement of gender equality and, in particular, Millennium Development Goal 3 targets are proving to be very difficult challenges which require further efforts by the European Commission and the Member States alike.

The European Consensus on Development (2005) identified gender equality as a core part of all policy strategies and stipulated that the EU would include “*a strong gender component in all its policies and practices in its relations with developing countries*”. The 2007 EC Communication on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Developing Cooperation further strengthened this commitment by including gender mainstreaming (together with specific actions) as a key element of the EU’s strategy in this respect.

The Council Conclusions on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Development Cooperation (2007) stressed the close inter-linkages between sustainable achievements in poverty reduction and development and the empowerment of women, including their political empowerment. The Council fully supported the approach of increasing the efficiency of gender mainstreaming and refocusing specific actions for women’s empowerment presented in the Communication. The European Commission and EU Member States are working on an EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in the EU’s external relations and development cooperation, scheduled for adoption in 2010

With regard to financing, in addition to the resources available under the country or regional aid programmes, the EC also has thematic budget lines, including the Thematic Programme “Investing in People” for the period 2007–2013. This programme contains a separate financial envelope for fund-

ing EC actions in the area of promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. The funds available are allocated through calls for proposals from eligible organisations and by direct agreements with selected partners. Priority areas include the implementation of international commitments at country level; capacity building of women's NGOs; and strengthening the statistical capacity of governments in order to use gender-disaggregated indicators and data.

The promotion of equality in individual country strategies under the 10th European Development Fund was supported by the drawing up of programming guidelines and the monitoring of equality issues in national plans. Gender mainstreaming guidelines for Strategy Papers have been drawn up to support gender equality in country and regional programming.

Humanitarian Aid policy

The EU has reaffirmed the principles relating to gender equality in the European consensus on humanitarian aid and has committed itself to promoting the active participation of women and to incorporating protection strategies against sexual and gender-based violence in all aspects of humanitarian interventions. In accordance with its action plan, an external review of gender issues, including strategies against sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian interventions, has been finalised. In addition, internal guidelines for funding humanitarian protection activities have been drawn up.

2.3.5 Barriers to progress on gender mainstreaming

The process of embedding the gender mainstreaming strategy is on track. It needs, however, to be consolidated and further developed, and to encompass services and policy sectors that so far have remained untouched. Progress to date is rather piecemeal. Numerous activities have been carried out, but the overall impression is that isolated measures are still the norm. A systematic approach is needed, including in particular the effective application of a gender impact assessment of policies, the development of statistics broken down by sex, the use of indicators to measure progress and training programmes to develop gender expertise. The dual approach to gender equality, combining gender mainstreaming and specific measures will continue to play a vital role in the promotion of *de facto* equality for women and men.

2.4 GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality plays an important role in promoting women's rights and equality between women and men. Its origin goes back to the creation in 1979 of an *ad hoc* committee on women rights and equal opportunities. The standing committee was created in 1984. In the sixth legislative period from July 2004 to July 2009, the committee adopted 34 initiative reports, 9 legislative reports and 117 opinions, and held 33 public hearings

Gender mainstreaming

In accordance with the European Parliament Resolution dated 13 March 2003, the committee should regularly draw up a report on gender mainstreaming in the EP committees' and delegations' work. During the sixth legislative period, two such reports have been adopted. As a basis for the reports, the committee prepares a questionnaire to be filled in by Members in the Network of Chairs or Vice-Chairs appointed in each committee as responsible for gender mainstreaming. Delegations have also created a similar Network. The Networks of Chairs/Vice-Chairs are seconded by a Network of administrators in each parliamentary committee and delegation, coordinated by the FEMM Committee's secretariat.

The abovementioned questionnaire is composed of 28 questions divided into four parts covering the following areas: the scope of the committee, the gender equality strategy, implementation of gender mainstreaming and expert assessment, consultation and cooperation on gender-related issues.

Another basis for the reports on gender mainstreaming is presentations in the committee by invited Members of the mentioned Networks on the state of implementation of gender mainstreaming in the respective committee's work. The purpose of this report is to assess the extent of implementation of gender mainstreaming and progress made by committees and delegations in this field. The second report (adopted in April 2009) underlines the need for appropriate training to ensure a good understanding and implementation of gender mainstreaming.

High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity

The High Level Group on Gender Equality was created in 2004 by a decision by the Bureau of the Parliament, as a consequence of the Parliament resolution of 13 March 2003 regarding gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament.

The High Level Group is in charge of promoting and implementing gender mainstreaming in the internal structures and bodies of the European Parliament. It is chaired by a Vice Chair of the Parliament, and the chair of the FEMM committee is one of the members of the High Level Group. It regularly monitors the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the EP activities: the committees' work, budget, information policy, communication policy etc.

In 2006, the High Level Group asked for the creation of an internal working group on gender-neutral language. The main task of this group was to analyse the language used in EP documents and to present guidelines on gender-neutral language in the European Parliament. In 2007, in the framework of the equality and diversity policy of the European Parliament, the Bureau amended the name of the Group and enlarged its competence to include diversity.

Follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing +10)

An ad hoc delegation of the FEMM committee took part in the 49th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women held from 28 February to 11 March 2005 in New York, the objective of which was to review the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action 10 years after its introduction. The Committee also participated in preparations for the 49th session at a conference organised in Luxembourg by the Luxembourg Presidency on 2 and 3 February 2005.

The key strands of the committee's position were set out in the European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2005, which called *inter alia* for:

- Ratification by the Member States of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,
- Greater participation by women in the economic, political and social decision-making process,
- Implementation of *gender mainstreaming* and *gender-based budgeting* in Community legislation.

The follow-up to the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women was the subject of a series of oral questions put to the Commission and the Council within the context of the European Parliament debate on International Women's Day, 8 March 2005.

2.5 EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

With more than 2500 member organisations, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) is the largest network of women's organisations in the European Union (EU). The EWL promotes the realisation of equality between women and men in all areas. The EWL primarily aims to influence the institutions of the EU but also works with the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

The most important aspect of the activities of the EWL in the 2004–2009 period is related to its growth: in 2009, the EWL comprises member organisations in the 30 EU Member States and accession countries (compared to 15 national coordinations in 2004) and 20 Europe-wide member organisations. This has improved diversity and brought new perspectives and concerns, which are reflected in the priorities adopted by the EWL.

In 2004–2009, the EWL monitored the most important political and legislative developments related to equality between women and men at European and international level, including the meetings of the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women (follow-up of the Beijing process), the adoption and implementation of the European Commission Roadmap for Gender Equality, the 2004 Intergovernmental Conference, the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs and the adoption of various European directives.

The EWL also developed its work in relation to the diversity of women, in particular regarding the need to both give a voice to migrant women's organisations at European level and to integrate a gender perspective into immigration, integration, asylum and anti-discrimination policies as well as the need to tackle multiple discrimination in anti-discrimination legislation.

Another important part of the EWL's work is to cooperate with other women's rights or civil society organisations at European and international level on a wide range of issues and to play a strong role in contributing to civil dialogue at EU level.

2.5.1 EWL activities related to the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action

Women and the economy / Women and poverty

The EWL followed many issues relating to the broad area of women's economic independence, which encompasses employment, reconciliation of private and professional life, the gender pay gap, women and poverty and social policy. Weaving the gender equality thread throughout these remains one of the key challenges for the EWL. The 2006 "Who Cares?" campaign of the

EWL focused on the provision of care services for all dependants and was followed in 2008–2009 by intensive work on new European measures related to maternity leave and parental leave. The need for the integration of a strong gender equality perspective in the work on poverty and social exclusion, including the annual European roundtables and preparation for the European Year against Poverty in 2010 was a permanent focus of the EWL work.

Education and training of women

Education is one of the gaps that the EWL has been highlighting in European gender equality legislation. In 2004–2009, the EWL produced education material for its members on issues such as gender budgeting, asylum, violence against women.

Women and health

The EWL actions focused mainly on sexual and reproductive health and rights – see women’s human rights section.

Violence against women (VAW)

The EWL enlarged its Observatory on Violence against Women (created 1997), now comprising 42 experts from 30 countries and set up a specific branch working on all forms of violence against women, the Policy Action Centre on VAW (EPAC VAW).

These are permanent monitoring and advocacy structures promoting measures to combat VAW and protecting women victims at national, and in particular at European level where no common policy exists. The EWL also undertakes many activities to fight against trafficking in women and sexual exploitation of women, including a transnational project in 14 countries in 2006 and the coordination of a large project in the Nordic Baltic Region (2005–2008), aiming at setting standards and developing assistance for women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Women and armed conflict

The EWL continuously stressed the need to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. A comprehensive position paper is to be adopted in 2009 on the basis of debates with the EWL membership.

Women in power and decision-making

The promotion of parity democracy, namely the equal participation of women and men in decision-making is at the core of the EWL's work, notably in relation to European elections (2004 Campaign "European Elections: Have we got the right balance?"). In 2009, with its 50/50 Campaign for Democracy, the EWL continued to ask for binding measures for parity democracy in all EU institutions with the support of 200 high-level supporters and more than 40 events across the EU.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

A dual approach combining well-resourced specific measures and institutions for women's rights and efficient gender mainstreaming, including gender budgeting, is necessary to realise gender equality. The EWL stressed the need for strong institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, including in relation to the creation of a strong European Gender Equality Institute, and in favour of a strong new women's rights agency within the United Nations system (UN Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign 2008–2009).

Human rights of women

EWL has worked to ensure the inclusion a women's rights perspective in the work on fundamental rights both within and outside the EU through collective actions, contribution to reports and advocacy work. The protection of women's reproductive health and rights as part of women's human rights and the fight against setback in this area was made a key area of concern through common campaigning (referendum in Portugal in 2007), collaboration with specialised organisations and policy work (EWL Position Paper 2005) at EU, Council of Europe and UN level. The EWL has led also some activities in the area of religions and women's rights (seminar and Position Paper 2007). Finally, women's human rights are central to the EWL activities related to promoting gender – sensitive asylum policies in the EU (Publication of an advocacy guide in 2007).

Women and the media

In 2006, the EWL worked intensively on the revision of the European Television without Frontiers Directive, focusing on aspects relating to the protection of fundamental rights and women's rights, anti-discrimination and violence against women in advertising and television content. The EWL

is continuing its work on media by promoting its contact with journalists and gathering material in relation to the fight against gender stereotypes, sexism and violence in the media.

Women and the environment

The EWL was very active in 2006 in lobbying in relation to the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemicals Regulation (REACH), highlighting women's concerns in relation to chemicals.

The girl child

The EWL cooperated on several occasions with the European Youth Forum and World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (joint events or policy work). The EWL also specifically monitored the adoption of the EU strategy on the rights of the child in 2007, to ensure that equality concerning the girl child becomes an integral part of the strategy.

REFERENCES:

Gender mainstreaming of employment policies – A comparative review of thirty European countries – See also “The National reform Programmes 2008 and the gender aspects of the European employment strategy”, assessment report by the Expert Group on Gender and Employment issues (EGGE).

Mapping the maze: getting more women to the top in research, 2008.

III Development of institutional mechanisms in the Member States (H)

3.1 THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FROM THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women were defined as the critical area of concern “H” in the *UN Beijing Platform for Action* of 1995 (PfA), and three strategic objectives were put forward in this area:

- H.1 Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies
- H.2 Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects
- H.3 Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

3.2 AVAILABILITY AND RELEVANCE OF EU-WIDE INDICATORS

In June 2005, the Council invited the Member States and the Commission to strengthen institutional mechanisms for promoting gender equality and to create a framework to assess the implementation of the PfA in order to create a more consistent and systematic monitoring of progress. The Council also invited the Commission to include the assessment of relevant indicators, developed for the follow-up of the implementation of the PfA, in its annual report to the Spring European Council.

A national structure for the advancement of women is regarded as the central policy-coordinating unit inside government and its main task is to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas. The necessary conditions for an effective functioning of such national structures include:

- location at the highest possible level in the government,
- institutional mechanisms or processes that facilitate the involvement of non-governmental organisations from the grass roots upwards,
- sufficient resources in terms of budget and professional capacity,
- the possibility of influencing the development of all governmental policies.

In 2006, the Finnish EU Presidency undertook a study on the institutional mechanisms in the Member States. The Council decided in December 2006 on three indicators concerning this area of concern:

- Indicator 1. Status of governmental responsibility in promoting gender equality
- Indicator 2. Personnel resources of the governmental gender equality body and personnel resources of the designated body or bodies for the promotion of equal treatment of women and men.
- Indicator 3. Gender mainstreaming.

It was the aim of the Finnish Presidency that the proposed indicators would measure the attainment of some of the key objectives of PfA critical area H, and at the same time focus on relevant political targets of the EU and the Member States.

The indicators are useful elaborations of both the first and the second objectives concerning the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women that are put forward in the PfA. The indicators cover both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the institutional mechanisms, which is necessary in order to evaluate to what extent the two objectives have been met. What is still lacking for a more comprehensive evaluation of strategic objectives one and two is an indicator that is related to strategic objective H.3 – generating and disseminating data and information disaggregated by sex.

In the report from the Finnish Presidency it is stated that the task of developing a set of three indicators did not leave room for an indicator on statistics. To develop a fourth indicator that assesses the third strategic objective is both necessary as a tool for evaluation of the two other objectives and as a tool for a more general evaluation of all parts of the PfA. However, in the questionnaire sent out to the Member States by the Finnish Presidency one question asking for a general evaluation of the gender specificity of the national and regional statistical services was included.

An evaluation of the indicators requires both qualitative and quantitative information, and the quantitative parts should preferably be gathered from European Union statistics. At present there is no statistical overview on gender equality machineries at European Union level. Comprehensive statistical information would greatly facilitate the evaluation of the indicators. Regarding the more qualitative aspects of the indicators, there is still a need for regular surveys among the Member States.

In this report, the evaluations and analyses are based on the UNECE

reports sent in by the Member States. However, the presentations on institutional mechanisms differ significantly between the reports, as does the extent to which the Member States address the three objectives. This has created difficulties in carrying out coherent evaluations of the indicators in the Member States, most notably in relation to whether Member States that have previously implemented basic institutional mechanisms have increased their efforts or not. Thus, it has not been possible to carry out more finely-tuned analyses of the progress of the institutional machinery in the Member States.

Indicator 1: The strategic objective H.1. Create and strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies includes six sub-objectives. They can be summarised as follows: Responsibility for gender equality policies should be awarded at the highest possible level of government, such as the level of a Cabinet Minister. The national machinery should be located at the highest possible level of government. It should have clearly defined mandates, adequate resources, ability to influence policy, to formulate and review legislation, and provide staff training. The governments should also establish procedures to allow the machinery to gather information on government-wide policy issues at an early stage and use it in the policy development and review process. The government should report regularly to legislative bodies on progress in the efforts undertaken, and promote the active involvement of the broad and diverse range of institutional actors in the public, private and voluntary sectors in the work for equality between women and men.

Directive 2002/73/EC provides that Member States shall designate and make the necessary arrangements for a body or bodies for the promotion, analysis, monitoring and support of equal treatment of all persons without discrimination on grounds of sex. These bodies may form part of the agencies in charge at national level of the defence of human rights or the safeguarding of individuals' rights. The Member States shall ensure that the competences of these bodies include independent assistance to the victims, conducting independent surveys on discrimination and publishing independent reports and making recommendations (Article 8a).

It must be noted that the term "independent" refers to the independent powers of those bodies defined in Article 8a of Directive 2002/73/EC, such as powers to provide independent assistance to victims of discrimination in pursuing their complaints about discrimination. The bodies may be established by government decisions, and their resources are usually from government budget allocations.

Indicator 2: Adequate resources are a basic element for progress in gender equality. A government commitment to promoting gender equality can therefore be measured in terms of resource allocation to the governmental gender equality body.

Indicator 3: Mainstreaming gender equality is presented as the second main objective of the PfA critical area of institutional mechanisms. According to the PfA, governments should seek to ensure that before policy decisions are taken, an analysis of their impact on women and men respectively is carried out. Governments should also evaluate the impact of employment and income policies to ensure that women are direct beneficiaries of development. Governments should promote a gender perspective in legislation and give all ministries the mandate to review policies and programmes from a gender perspective. Inter-ministerial coordination structures should be established. In addition to the objectives addressed to governments, the PfA includes objectives addressed to national machineries, advising them on promoting gender mainstreaming. These objectives, however, deal more or less with the same issues as the ones directed at governments.

The indicator on gender mainstreaming is regarded as a sum variable of key elements of gender mainstreaming. Important sub-indicators are the status of the governmental commitment to gender mainstreaming in public administration, i.e. whether it is a legal obligation, a de facto binding decision, recommendation etc, the existence of various types of structures and methods, such as inter-ministerial working groups on gender mainstreaming and the use of specific methods, namely gender impact assessment in drafting legislation and policy programmes, and gender budgeting.

3.3 PROGRESS OF INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS IN THE MEMBER STATES

3.3.1 Status of governmental responsibility in promoting gender equality²⁰

All Member States have a governmental gender equality body (sometimes called equal opportunities body or women's bureau) and this body often has an overarching responsibility, i.e. deals with several or all parts of the policy processes. In federal states there are several ministers and several governmental gender equality bodies. The agencies are placed at the highest level in a

20. Information from the MS reports to UNECE 2009.

ministry in almost all of the Member States (with the exception of IT, HU, RO and SI). Greece only has a governmental council with quite small resources and an unclear status compared to a governmental body, although this council is the first permanent governmental body on gender equality and was launched in 2006.

The main tasks of the governmental gender equality bodies are policy analysis and policy formulation for the government, promotion of the implementation of government decisions and monitoring reforms, reviewing and drafting legislation and handling EU affairs and international affairs. These bodies also often coordinate and develop the implementation of gender mainstreaming if the Member State regards gender mainstreaming as a main strategy when addressing gender equality. Information, publishing and training are also common tasks for the gender equality bodies while involvement in research is uncommon. Cyprus, France, Ireland, Portugal and Spain explicitly state this as a task for their gender equality body.

One major division line seems to be between those Member States where the gender equality body both takes law and policy initiatives and is responsible for the implementation of these, and those Member States where the gender equality body mainly deals with implementation and dissemination. Member States with a more recent institutionalisation of gender equality issues at the governmental level (for example BG, PL, RU) have a fairly small unit that formally deals with all tasks in the policy process but where the main focus lies on initiating training and providing information on gender equality issues and gender mainstreaming. Here, EU-funded projects seem to play an important role in developing both knowledge and tools for implementing gender equality in these Member States

Some of the Member States also have both a governmental body and a governmental council, and the council is often comprised of both high-level civil servants and representatives from different NGOs and sometimes also members of parliament (CZ, FI, FR, HU, LU, PL, PT, SI and UK). The relationship between the governmental bodies and the parliaments differs, but for a majority of the Member States there is a system of reporting regularly to the national or federal legislative bodies on the progress of gender equality efforts (BE, DE, DK, ES, GR, FR, IE, CY, LT, LU, MT, NL, AT, PT, SK, SE, UK).

All Member States also have some form of action plan for gender equality, although there are still eight countries (AT, EE, DE, GR, IT, HU, MT and PL) that lack an overall policy document for the national gender equality policies. Cyprus and Luxemburg have since 2006 launched their first comprehensive

action plans on gender equality. Most action plans deal with a broad range of questions but issues concerning education, employment, decision-making, social rights and violence against women are priorities for most Member States.

A majority of the Member States have a Cabinet Minister who is responsible for gender equality issues but Greece, Poland and Slovenia do not have a Minister responsible for this policy area and in several Member States the responsible Minister does not have “gender equality” or “women” in the title (c.f. IE).²¹ In some Member States this task is framed in terms of Women’s Rights, i.e. a Minister for Women’s Rights or a Minister for Women and Equality (c.f. UK). There is no Member State where the Cabinet Minister only has gender equality/women’s rights as her or his responsibility. The portfolio is most often combined with a responsibility for family, social justice and labour market questions.

All Member States have legislation that addresses the importance of the equal value of all citizens and non-discrimination laws, and in addition to this they have an independent body for the protection of equal treatment. There is an increasing tendency for this independent body to handle protection against discrimination on several grounds, not only on the grounds of sex. In the 2006 report from the Finnish Presidency there was the same number of Member States that had an independent body for protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex as for discrimination on several grounds; 11 Member States. Today 16 of the Member States have implemented a multiple discrimination approach, i.e. have non-discrimination laws on several grounds and an independent body for protection against discrimination on several grounds.

The Nordic countries Denmark, Finland and Sweden have since 2006 launched bodies for the protection against multiple discrimination, as well as Belgium, Estonia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Poland. Other Member States has launched new laws on gender equality since 2005 (HU, UK) and there are also Member States that have an act which enforces gender mainstreaming (BG, DE, DK, EE, FI, ES, HU, SI and UK), see section 3.3.3.

3.3.2 Personnel resources

In the report from the Finnish Presidency the Member States were divided into two groups according to their population, and the report stated that in

21. Information on the responsible Minister has been very scarce in several of the UNECE reports.

the biggest EU MS (more than 35 million people) there are at least 35 employees working in the governmental gender equality body (see table 3.1). In the smaller Member States (16 million people or less), the number of employees of the governmental gender equality body ranges from 2 to 63. In all, compared to the size of the Member State, the biggest equality bodies are in Luxembourg, Malta, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, Cyprus and Austria. Relatively small equality bodies are by contrast in the Czech Republic, Germany, United Kingdom, Lithuania and Slovakia.

Although a comparison is made between the number of the employees and the population, it has to be noted that the workload of the governmental equality body does not increase in direct proportion to the population. Irrespective of the population size, the basic functions of the body are almost the same, as appears from the question concerning the mandate and functions of the body, which means that a certain minimum number of employees are needed irrespective of population size. To sum up, the personnel resources available for the independent bodies for the promotion of equal treatment vary substantially among the Member States. More detailed information in this issue from all Member States would make it possible to determine the emphasis on gender equality issues from a financial point of view.

In federal states like Belgium and Germany, there are also governmental gender equality bodies at sub-national level. The personnel of these bodies was not taken into account in the Finnish questionnaire, which may underestimate the number of personnel working with government gender equality policies in federal states. Spain is not a federal state, but there are Autonomous Communities, which have a certain level of autonomy, including gender equality competences. They have gender equality bodies and personnel, which are not counted here. In many MS there are also gender equality bodies or experts at the regional and local level. These were not counted in the Finnish questionnaire, which focuses on the central administration of the government. Thus the numbers given do not give the whole picture of government allocations of administrative personnel working for gender equality, as the personnel working outside the central level is not counted.

3.3.3 Gender mainstreaming

The legal basis for gender mainstreaming is provided for by Article 3(2) of the EC Treaty, which sets out that the European Community should aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between women and men in all its activities. In addition, Article 2 of the EC Treaty explicitly provides that the

promotion of equality between men and women is a task of the European Community.

Gender mainstreaming in the EU is defined as “the integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy process – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It means assessing how policies impact on the life and position of both women and men – and taking responsibility to re-address them if necessary. This is the way to make gender equality a concrete reality in the lives of women and men creating space for everyone within the organisations as well as in communities – to contribute to the process of articulating a shared vision of sustainable human development and translating it into reality”.

Both theoretical discussions of the concept of gender mainstreaming and empirical studies on how gender mainstreaming has been implemented in different policy areas have been growing fields of research since the late 1990s (see, for example, *Social Politics*, vol. 12, no. 3, 2005; and *Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2006; both special issues on gender mainstreaming). The discussion among both researchers and practitioners on the fruitfulness – and the substance – of gender mainstreaming has also been extensive (see for example, Verloo, 2005; Bacchi and Eveline, 2003; Mazey, 2001; Rees, 1998). Clearly, a full inclusion of a gender perspective in all policy-making is seen as a profound, structural change. Yet given that society is seen as pervaded by dimensions of power, of which gender is one, the difficulties of implementing gender mainstreaming are seen as huge. Disagreements also relate to the question of whether the dominant political culture in the Western world, informed by globalisation, new forms of governance and neo-liberalism, should be seen as opposed to or congruent with gender mainstreaming.

Whereas, for example, Teresa Rees (1998) argues that mainstreaming has the potential to transform organisations in “a gender equal way”, i.e. also political institutions, Carol Bacchi and Joan Eveline (2003) maintain that the implementation of gender mainstreaming does not necessarily imply a challenge to institutional norms and can go hand in hand with traditional understandings of gender, i.e. it does not address structural inequalities between women and men.

There is also a need to clarify the distinctions between the concepts gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and also to connect these to concepts like equal opportunities and women’s rights.

In the EU publication *100 words of Gender Equality*, a dictionary of Equality terms (1998) gender equality is defined as:

“... equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference, and aims to promote the full participation of women and men in society.”

In the same document gender mainstreaming is defined as:

“the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by actors normally involved in policy-making.”

Gender equality is defined as a political goal that could be met via a variety of normative understandings and policy initiatives but with the main ambition of creating equal conditions for men and women, while gender mainstreaming is one (of several) and today the dominant strategy for implementing gender equality goals. According to these definitions, gender budgeting is understood as a form of gender mainstreaming, i.e. gender mainstreaming in finance policy. In relation to gender equality, the concept of equal opportunities implies a more narrow and also individualised understanding of the policy task at hand, i.e. as a concept that does not necessarily include structural change. On the other hand, the concept of women's rights connotes a collective and structural understanding of the policy task, related to demands articulated outside formal politics by the women's movement. Sometimes the use of the term “women's rights” implies that this policy area only concerns women, making men invisible.

There are different methods or techniques that can be used in implementing gender mainstreaming. Sex-disaggregated statistics are a necessary prerequisite for using some of the other techniques. Gender impact assessment, gender analysis and gender equality analysis all refer to techniques for analysing bills, proposals, programmes and other decision-making materials. An overall conclusion is that gender mainstreaming finds expression in some form in almost all Member States. Some Member States highlight the strategy of gender mainstreaming as fundamental for implementing gender equality policies and/or creating equal opportunities for women and men, while others do not stress this as an overall strategy. In ten Member States gender mainstreaming is legally binding (BE, BG, DE, DK, EE, FI, ES, LV, SI and UK) while nine MS has gender mainstreaming as a de facto binding decision, i.e. although gender mainstreaming is not regulated by law it is clearly stated as

governmental practice, for example through governmental communications on gender equality.

In five Member States gender mainstreaming is only a recommended strategy and in Romania there is no declared commitment to gender mainstreaming as a strategy for implementing gender equality (see table 3.2).

Although gender mainstreaming, at least to a certain extent, is adopted as a strategy by most Member States, there are differences in both how gender mainstreaming is structured and how the strategy is implemented. The main division concerning strategies is between Member States that have adopted an inter-ministerial coordination structure and those Member States that have contact persons in different ministries who are responsible for ensuring that gender mainstreaming is implemented in that specific ministry. One tentative conclusion is that gender mainstreaming is carried out in a more comprehensive manner in Member States with both intra- and inter-ministerial structures. However, in order to confirm this conclusion there is a need for a more qualitative analysis of the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming in different policy areas, i.e. including both the content and the form of gender mainstreaming.

It is important to note the lack of implementation of gender mainstreaming in finance policies, i.e. gender budgeting. Only four Member States, namely Austria, Finland France and Spain have an explicit statement on gender budgeting (see table 3.3). This highlights the fact that gender mainstreaming remains a strategy that is implemented in some policy areas but not in all.

As mentioned in the earlier section, there seems to be a difference between those Member States where the gender equality body both takes law and policy initiatives and is responsible for the implementation of these, and those Member States where the gender equality body mainly deals with implementation and dissemination. The same distinction can be made regarding how the Member States put gender mainstreaming into practice. Some Member States implement gender mainstreaming in law drafting, others in the drafting of programs and projects, and yet others implement it throughout the whole policy-making process.

Finally, it is important to consider that the structure, techniques and extent of gender mainstreaming do not give any specific information on the *content* of gender mainstreaming. What actually is being mainstreamed depends on how the Member State articulate problems, visions and priorities concerning gender equality. For example, could gender equality be interpreted differently depending on whether the focus is on gender difference (as a natural or inher-

ent difference) or on gender inequality? Depending on how gender equality is defined – both explicitly and implicitly – the implementation of gender mainstreaming will mean different results in relation to the goal that is stated in the PfA, i.e. the goal of increasing women's rights. If gender equality is built on an understanding of gender as a natural difference between men and women, there is a risk that the implementation of gender mainstreaming will not challenge prevailing gender relations in society.

Thus, there is a need for each Member State to articulate the relationship between the definition of gender equality and the content of gender mainstreaming. It cannot be determined from the UNECE reports by the Member States how and if this is a practice or not.

3.3.4 Other strategies implemented in the Member States

While gender mainstreaming is the main strategy when implementing gender equality in the EU and the Member States, the EU also adopts a so-called dual strategy pointing to the importance of working with specific actions in order to reach gender equality. A majority of Member States have adopted gender mainstreaming as their main strategy, although a majority also clearly states the need to combine gender mainstreaming with specific actions. These measures are mainly directed towards women, or different groups of women like immigrant women and women who suffer violence (for example trafficking for sexual exploitation). There are also some Member States that state the need for special efforts directed at men as a group. In relation to institutional mechanisms, some governmental bodies handle the funding of these special efforts and it is also very common for governmental bodies to be involved in different projects (for example projects funded within the EU structural funds) that target specific groups of women, for example immigrant women.

Almost all Member States reported on active involvement by civil society actors – such as women's NGOs, other non-governmental organisations and social partners – in the work for the promotion of gender equality at national and/or federal level. The most common ways of cooperation and involvement are dissemination of information and publications, arranging conferences and seminars and consulting civil society actors on a regular basis in the preparatory process of gender equality reforms. Civil society actors are also invited to participate in various kinds of temporary bodies, committees, commissions and working groups. In addition, meetings and hearings are arranged in many Member States on a regular basis to allow discussion and deliberation with

the civil society actors on the government's efforts and policies on gender equality. The civil society actors are represented in an advisory body attached to the ministry responsible for gender equality in about half of the Member States.

Especially in some of the Member States in Central and Eastern Europe (CZ, HU, LT and SK), women's NGOs play a prominent role in both policy making and policy implementation, i.e. take part in both advisory bodies and act as consultants in preparatory processes of gender equality reforms on a regular basis. In some Member States (DE, DK, FI, PT and UK) there seems to be a tradition of cooperating with women's NGOs in order to develop gender equality policies. In Estonia (project-based) and Finland these processes also include supporting institutions for gender research.

Support to women's NGOs is thus part of the practice of some Member States while others draw the line quite clearly between institutionalised policies and NGO activism. Going back to the PfA, the involvement and support of women's NGO is underlined as important in the work of improving women's rights. Thus, this is still a goal to be reached by a majority of the Member States.

3.4 SEX-DISAGGREGATED STATISTICS

Regarding strategic objective H₃ – to generate and disseminate data and information disaggregated by sex – no indicator has been elaborated. Thus a follow-up on this strategic objective is difficult, both due to the lack of an indicator and the lack of information from the Member States. The extent to which the Member States have put the commitment to present sex-disaggregated data into practice is not possible to clarify in this report due to lack of data from several Member States. Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Portugal, Poland and Sweden state that they fulfil this commitment to a large extent, while Greece, Poland and Slovenia do this to a more moderate extent. In order to draw conclusions in relation to the other indicators, sex-disaggregated statistics are necessary.

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IV Implementations of actions in the critical areas of concern in the Member States

Analyses of the indicators and development since 2005

In December 1995, the European Council in Madrid acknowledged the commitments of the Declaration and Platform for Action from the IV World Conference in Beijing. In the conclusions of the Summit, the European Council expressed that it “wishes to continue action in favour of women with a view to achieving fully equal treatment” and for this purpose “the European Union will also monitor annually the action platform which emerged from the Beijing Conference”. Since then, the Council for Employment, Social Affairs, Health and Consumers Affairs (EPSCO) has conducted the annual reviews.

As at June 2009 the European Union has adopted indicators in nine critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action i.e.:

Women and Poverty (A)	3 indicators
Education and Training of Women (B)	3 indicators
Women and Health (C)	3 indicators
Violence against Women (D)	3 indicators
Women and Armed Conflict (E)	4 indicators
Women and the Economy (F)	18 indicators
Women in Power and Decision-making (G)	18 indicators
Institutional mechanisms (H)	3 indicators
The Girl Child (L)	3 indicators

In the following three areas of concern indicators have not been developed:

Human Rights of Women (I)

Women and the media (J)

Women and the Environment (K)

Different Presidencies have developed these indicators (see Annex I).

The following chapter presents and analyses the indicators developed and the developments in the EU Member States in the areas of concern on the basis of these indicators and on the basis of the answers from the MS to the UNECE Questionnaire on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action sent out in January 2009 (UNECE Report).

4.1. WOMEN AND POVERTY (A)

4.1.1. The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

As critical area A of the Beijing Platform for Action, the poverty of women is oriented by four strategic objectives, defined as follows:

- A.1 Review, adapt and maintain macro-economic policies and development of strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.
- A.2 Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.
- A.3 Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions.
- A.4 Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminisation of poverty.

4.1.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

The Portuguese EU Presidency prepared a report and proposed indicators for poverty among women. From a list of 18 possible multidimensional indicators, three indicators were decided on by the December 2007 Council.

- Indicator 1. At-risk of -poverty rate by age and sex.
- Indicator 2. At-risk-of-poverty rate by type of household and sex, including at-risk-of-poverty rate of single parents with dependent children.
- Indicator 3. Inactivity by age and sex
 - a) share of women and men who are inactive by age
 - b) share of inactive women and men who are not looking for a job for family care or personal reasons

The strategic objectives are expressed in terms of policies, while the indicators are expressed as outcomes, i.e. the indicators measure outcomes rather than the strategies by which they are achieved. This is in line with the nature of the open method of coordination, whereby MS agree on objectives but are left free to choose the policies by which these objectives are to be met. There is no connection between strategic objectives A.3 and A.4 and the indicators. The connection is easier to detect as far as strategic objectives A.1 and A.2 are concerned.

Indicator 1 is a "classical" poverty measure defined as the percentage of persons below the monetary poverty line. In this case the monetary poverty line is defined as 60 % of the median national adult-equivalent household disposable income of each MS and the at-risk-of-poverty rate for the age

categories 0–17, 18–64 and 65+ are presented. Data are taken from Eurostat, EU-SILC.

Indicator 1 does not directly measure women's poverty. There are a number of reasons for this. One is that having an income below the retained threshold of 60 % of the national equalised median income is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for being in a state of poverty, therefore this indicator is referred to as a measure of *poverty risk* (Eurostat 2005).²² Another reason is that this measurement refers to individuals living in households and presupposes that resources are equally shared among household members. However, there might be gender-based differences in the use of economic resources and in economic decision-making inside the household, which means that resources are not equally distributed.

Additionally if the household is seen as a collection of individuals, instead of as an entity, the possibility of different risks among its members becomes a possibility, especially if a time dimension is added to the risk. Women are less likely than men to secure a decent individual income through employment. Women have lower employment rates, a greater likelihood of interrupting their employment and working reduced hours to attend to family care responsibilities. They have lower pay and accumulate lower pension and other social benefits where eligibility is earnings-related or based on individual records of employment history. Gender inequalities produce a situation where women's individual risk of poverty is much higher than men's, especially if there is a divorce or if the other partner dies.

The use of the at-risk-of-poverty rate of women versus men is partly inadequate due to the lack of regular data on women's and men's own earnings, their economic contribution, the distribution and control of income within households. Women's poverty can only be revealed by looking within the household's "black box". These limits were underlined in the report by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU in 2007. Moreover, a positive sign will

22. The household's total disposable income is taken to be the total net monetary income by the household and its members. This includes all income from work, private income from investment and property, plus all social cash transfers received including old-age pensions, excluding any taxes and social contributions paid. The ECHP income data does not include some resources which are major determinants of living standards for some groups (receipts in kind, transfers paid to other households, imputed rent or interest payments). The income figures are scaled according to household composition (1 for the first adult, 0.5 for any other household member aged 14 and over and 0.3 for each child aged under 14). The resulting figure is attributed to each household member whether adult or child (Fagan et al. 2006 p. 51).

be the implementation of the first survey at EU level on “intra-household allocation of resources” in 2010 as an an-hoc module of the EU-SILC²³.

Indicator 2 is based on the same poverty measure as indicator 1, but here the categories are single parents, single women and single men without children. Data disaggregated by sex for single parents are not available.

The data for indicator 3 are from Eurostat, EU-Labour Force Survey. The assumption behind the indicator is that being employed and receiving earnings are crucial for escaping poverty and economic dependence. Due to gender imbalances, the interruption of working life or inactivity for family care reasons can act as women-specific factors that may generate a loss of economic independence and, later in the lifecycle, a lower level of social protection (lower pensions). This indicator also sheds some light on the factors of poverty at an individual level inside the household, but is far from unproblematic.

4.1.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

Indicator 1: Both income inequality and poverty have risen over the past 20 years (OECD 2009). The rise has been significant and widespread, affecting more than three-quarters of OECD countries. However, note that ‘poverty’ here is a relative concept. In the context of EU 27 the level of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold in the recently acceded Member States is low compared to the EU average. A poor person in the UK has more money than a poor Polish person, for example. Countries with high income inequality tend to have more widespread income poverty, although this does not always go hand-in-hand. Data clearly show that a significant number of people in the EU live at risk of poverty. 16 % of Europeans, or 79 million people, were at risk of poverty in 2007. As for the gender distribution, around 17 % of women and 15 % of men in the EU were at risk of poverty in 2007.

Poverty risk varies with age. Children (0–17 years) and the elderly (65–years) are more vulnerable than persons aged 18–64. A substantial shift in poverty has taken place; children and young adults are today more likely to be poor than the population as a whole, while they were below or close to the average 20 years ago in the OECD countries. The higher risk of poverty for children than for working age adults can be explained by the fact that some children live with a single parent – a category which has grown substantially – and others in families with many children. In both cases the risk of poverty

23. The list of variables has been adopted via Commission Regulation (EC) N° 646/2009 of 23 July 2009.

is bigger. However, there is no reason to expect a gender gap among children since they are supported by their parents and the proportion of boys and girls can be expected to be the same in low as in high-income, in single parent and two-parent families.

The risk of poverty is smallest among working age adults and the differences between the countries are not big (Eurostat, EU-SILC, 2007). In four countries the risk of poverty is actually smaller for women than for men (FI, PL, RO, SE) and in two the risk is the same (DE, SI). In remaining countries the risk of poverty is bigger for women than for men. The difference is biggest in Malta and Cyprus (-4 %). However, it should be noted that the result in this age group to a high extent is the result of the way the at-risk-of-poverty rate is measured; i.e. the assumption that household resources are pooled. This means that married/cohabiting women and men in households are assumed to share the resources and that their incomes are therefore of the same size. The reason why there is a gender gap at all is that there are also single women and men, and single women tend to have lower incomes than men.

The risk of poverty has fallen for older people in OECD countries (OECD 2009). Those around retirement age have seen the biggest increases in income over the past 20 years and pensioner poverty has fallen in many countries. However, of the three age groups here, we find the widest dispersion among the elderly (65+ years) between women and men and between countries. More than half of the elderly women in Cyprus are at risk of poverty, and a third or more in Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia (Eurostat, EU-SILC, 2007). At the other end we have Hungary, Czech Republic, Luxembourg and Poland with less than 10 %. The gender gaps in the risk of poverty are especially wide in the Baltic countries and there is a lower risk of poverty for women than for men in Malta.

One reason for the big gender gap among the elderly is that there are many more single women in this category than in younger age groups because their husbands have died, women live longer than men and elderly women's possibilities of supporting themselves are limited if they have to live on their own earnings. Employment interruptions because of child rearing, no employment, temporary and part-time employment, low-status work, and the gender pay gap are background factors to the much greater risks of poverty faced by single women in old age (28 % as opposed to 20 % for older men in 2007²⁴). Pension

24. Joint Report on Social Inclusion and Social Protection, 2009 – Supporting Document: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/docs/social_inclusion/2009/supporting_document_en.pdf

entitlements are typically based on a time dimension – the number of contributory years, and on an earnings dimension – the amount earned through wages. Therefore, gender gaps in the risk of poverty in old age are likely to be smallest where the pension system is largely based on citizenship rather than past employment and earnings; or where countries have achieved gender equality in lifetime earnings and labour market participation (Fagan et al. 2006 p. 8).

Women's work and lives still differ from those of men and the social protection systems are not structured to accommodate the life patterns of many women. This leaves women with a patchwork of inadequate social protection, providing them with insufficient or no individual security. This is especially true for many older female pensioners today, who lack individual security because they have not made payments to pension schemes. But there is probably a difference in many countries between younger and older pensioners and it should also be mentioned that this indicator does not take into consideration assets in terms of savings and property for example, or for that matter debts, which can be assumed to be inequitably distributed between women and men, but also differ between countries depending on the pension system.

Indicator 2: One way of investigating the risk of poverty for women is to compare single women with single men, then questions are avoided of how resources in the household are distributed and how women's decision-making power and well-being are affected by not having their own earnings. Being single means a higher risk for poverty than being married/cohabiting for both women and men. In Latvia for example, more than half of the single women and men are at-risk-of-poverty. In most countries the risk of poverty is higher for single women than for single men, but in Poland, Hungary and Luxembourg the situation is the reverse, and in Sweden, Finland, France and Denmark the risk is more or less the same for the two sexes (see figure 4.1.1).

Single parents are besides elderly women a category, which is often mentioned as facing a particular risk of suffering from poverty. The number of single parents is rising across most of the EU. In all countries the majority of single parents are women, accounting for 80 to 95 % of all lone parents in most countries (Fagan et al. 2006 p. 11). The main entry route into lone parenthood is relationship breakdown for married or cohabiting couples; sole parenting (single women who become mothers without marrying or cohabiting) is much less common. Lone-parent households are susceptible to poverty for several reasons. There are extra economic disadvantages and work-family reconciliation

pressures when raising children alone compared with the resources available in dual-parent households. The pressures of being the single breadwinner are compounded for women because the wages they can obtain in the labour market are lower on average than those of men.

When we compare women aged 65 years and older (of whom some are married/cohabiting), and single parents (of whom a majority are women), we find that the risk of poverty is considerably greater for single parents (and their children) in most countries with the exception of Denmark, Finland, Latvia and especially Cyprus (see figure 4.1.2).

Employment alone is not enough to protect single parents from poverty. In many countries the high poverty rates experienced by lone mothers coexist with an employment rate which matches or exceeds those of mothers in couple households yet still leaves lone mothers exposed to greater poverty risks (Fagan et al. 2006). The risk of poverty for single parents is smallest in Denmark (17 %), Finland (22 %) and Sweden (24%). However, single parents in these countries are still economically disadvantaged compared with two-parent households, in Sweden they are also poorer when compared with elderly women. More than half of the single parents in Malta (54 %) are at-risk-of-poverty, which is the highest rate, followed by Luxembourg (54 %), Estonia and UK (44 %), Lithuania (42 %) and Ireland (40 %) (EU-SILC 2007).

Women in the EU MS, whether they are employed or unemployed, young or older, have a less secure life situation than men. Women face a greater risk than men of falling into poverty and this is especially the case for women from more vulnerable or marginalised groups (migrant and ethnic minority women, disabled women). For women entry into poverty mainly reflects family- and job-related events such as childbirth, divorce and widowhood.

Indicator 3: An inactive person is defined as a person inactive in the labour market. It does not however mean that persons who are in this category are inactive in general. They can for example be taking care of children or incapacitated adults, doing domestic work or studying.

The proportion of economically inactive women and men aged from 15–24 years is between 60 and 80 % in several countries (Eurostat, EU-LFS, 2007). Country differences arise from differences in national education systems and school leaving ages and from rates of unemployment (Rubery et al. 2004). The differences between women and men are limited. The gender gap in the share of inactive persons is lowest in Sweden (-1 %), Finland (0 %) and the Netherlands (1 %) and highest in Slovenia, Latvia and Estonia (12 %). A higher share

of “inactive” women might be a result of women studying longer than men.

The share of inactive women in the age category 25-49 ranges from 10 % in Slovenia and 52 % in Malta and the gap between women and men differs ranges from 3 % in Slovenia to 48 % in Malta (Eurostat, EU-LFS, 2007). It is in this age category we find the highest share of women and men in employment, but also where childcare responsibilities for women are the most intensive. The gender inactivity gap is 15 % in EU27; it ranges from 3 % in Slovenia to 48 % in Malta.

In most EU countries the retirement age is now the same for women as for men (Fagan et al. 2006 Table 3.6). Austria, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Poland do not have the same retirement age for men and women. The retirement age is set somewhere between 60 and 67 years, however, the average exit age of both sexes is almost universally lower than the official retirement age, especially for women. Retirement is an important reason as to why the share of inactive persons increases among persons aged 50-64. Also in this age category the disparity between countries is significant. Twenty percent of women in Sweden are inactive, while the corresponding share in Malta is 83 %. The gap between women and men is smallest in Finland (1 %) and largest in Malta (45 %) (Eurostat, EU-LFS, 2007).

The indicator which might reflect women's economic vulnerability best is the share of women who are outside the labour market and not looking for work due to family or personal reasons and caring for children or incapacitated adults. Many of these women do not have any income of their own. In the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, Bulgaria and Latvia it is more common for women to be outside the labour market because they are taking care of children or incapacitated adults than because of family or personal reasons. In Luxembourg, Malta, Cyprus, Spain and Greece it is the other way around (see figure 4.1.3).²⁵

Many women lack individual incomes and suffer from inadequate social protection. This is especially the case among migrant, ethnic minority and disabled women and this is one of the reasons why these groups of women face a higher risk of poverty.

25. Data from Estonia, France, Ireland and the UK are lacking.

4.1.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

In their reports, some MS mention that living standards have risen lately, but also that income differences have grown. All MS report that women continue to be more affected by poverty than men, especially single mothers and women 65 years and older living in one-person households. The reasons for this are women's shorter employment periods, caring for children, lower salaries and longer life expectancy.

In a number of countries, pensions rights acquired only on the basis of social tax payments have been introduced, which may increase the differences between women's and men's pensions in the future. Other vulnerable groups mentioned are unemployed persons, households with three or more children, and rural, migrant and Roma households.

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4.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN (B)

4.2.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform of Action

The education and training of women was the second critical area of concern targeted by the international community in Beijing in 1995; the following six strategic objectives were specified:

- B.1 Ensure equal access to education.
- B.2 Eradicate illiteracy among women.
- B.3 Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, continuing education.
- B.4 Develop non-discriminatory education and training.
- B.5 Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms.
- B.6 Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

4.2.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

Germany's EU Presidency prepared a report on indicators on the education and training of women and the Council decided in May 2007 on three such indicators as follows:

- Indicator 1. Proportion of female graduates and male graduates of all tertiary graduates in mathematics, sciences and technical disciplines
- Indicator 2. Employment rate of women and men (aged between 25 and 39 years, and aged between 40 and 64 years) by highest level of education attained
- Indicator 3a. Proportion of female ISCED 5a-graduates and male ISCED 5a-graduates of all ISCED 5a-graduates and proportion of female PhD graduates and male PhD graduates of all PhD graduates by broad field of study and in total
- Indicator 3b. Proportion of female and male academic staff in academia differentiated by grades A, B and C, and in total.

The strategic objectives are expressed in terms of policies, while the indicators refer to outcomes, i.e. the indicators measure outcomes rather than the strategies by which they are achieved. This is in line with the nature of the open method of coordination, whereby MS agree on objectives but are left free to choose the policies by which those objectives are to be met. The indicators are linked to strategic objectives B1, B3 and B4.

Indicator 1 describes the proportion of female and male tertiary graduates

in mathematics, science (science and computing) and technical disciplines (engineering, manufacturing and construction), from both public and private institutions, completing graduate/post-graduate (ISCED 5) as well as advanced research studies (ISCED 6), compared to the total number of tertiary graduates in the respective fields of study. Data are from the Eurostat Education Indicators, and the reference year is 2006. The same data are used for Indicator 3a.

Data for Indicator 2 are from the Eurostat Labour Force Survey (LFS). The classification used defines three levels of educational attainment: (a) pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (ISCED 0-2); (b) upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 3-4); (c) tertiary education (ISCED 5-6).

Data for Indicator 3a are from the Eurostat Education Indicators and for Indicator 3b from She Figures, European Commission Education Indicators covering seven broad areas: teacher training and education science; health and welfare; humanities and arts; social science, business and law; agriculture and veterinary studies; science, mathematics and computing; and engineering, manufacturing and construction.

4.2.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

Indicator 1: Young women have not only caught up with men in their age group in terms of formal educational qualifications, they have even surpassed them (EFILCW 2008). The findings reveal a narrowing education gap between women and men and indicate a foreseeable new gender disparity in education: according to the data, men will be significantly under-represented in the group of higher-educated people in the future. However, women and men continue to study different subjects.

All EU MS show a pattern in which men outnumber women in mathematics, sciences and technical disciplines. With an EU average of 32 % female and 68 % male graduates, women are still under-represented and men over-represented in these fields. Women's under-representation and men's over-representation, however, differ between countries (Eurostat Education Indicators). The highest proportion of women in these disciplines is found in Estonia (43 %) and the lowest in the Netherlands (19 %). In many of the new MS, the share of women in these disciplines is above the EU average (EE, BG, CY, PL, RO, SK, LV, MT, LT), as it is in some southern European (PT, IT, EL) and two Nordic MS (SE, DK), while in most of the EU15 the proportion of females is below the EU average (UK, ES, IE, DE, FI, FR, BE, AT, NL).

Indicator 2: In all EU MS the employment rate for women and men increases as the level of educational attainment improves. The difference in the employment rate between women with a tertiary education and women with only basic schooling is bigger than the gender employment gap for women and men with tertiary education, or that for women and men with basic schooling. The difference between women of 40–64 years with differing educational levels is greater in the newer MS: in Lithuania and Slovakia it exceeds 50 percentage points (see figure 4.2.1). In the older MS the difference is more modest, but still over 20 percentage points in the UK and PT, where the difference is smallest. One explanation for the vast gap between women with different levels of education in the new MS is that the proportion of the population with low educational levels is small.

Moreover, if women with high education (ISCED 5–6) are compared with men with basic education (ISCED 0–2), then women’s employment level in the age group 40–64 years is higher in all countries except Malta and Cyprus and in the age group 25–39 in all countries except Italy, Greece, Luxembourg, Spain and Portugal (see figures 4.2.2 and 4.2.3). If the employment rate of women with educational level ISCED 3–4 is compared with the employment rate of men with lower educational level in most countries the difference is quite small.

While women’s total employment rates are lower than men’s in almost all EU countries, the differences decrease with increasing levels of education. The EU-average employment rates of women with tertiary education (25–39 years) are 84 %, of women with secondary education 72 % and of women with only basic schooling 51 % (see figure 4.2.4). The corresponding figures for women of 40–64 years are 80, 65 and 43 %, i.e. the employment rate is somewhat lower for the older than for the younger women. While this difference is also observed for men, the gap is smaller: an employment rate of 92 % for those with tertiary education aged 25–39 compared with 80 % of those with only basic schooling, and for those aged 40–64, 86 % and 66 % respectively.

Nevertheless, there remains a gap in employment rates between women and men with the same educational background, although it is much narrower among those with tertiary education than among those with only basic schooling. In 2006, the gap amounted to 8 percentage points among 25–39-year olds in the EU as a whole, ranging from 22 percentage points in the Czech Republic, 19 in Hungary, 17 in Slovakia, 2 in Lithuania to 1 percentage point in Romania (Eurostat, EU-Labour Force Survey). In countries where the employment gap is wide, the employment rate of the women in this group is relatively low, which means that valuable human capital is not being used.

The gender employment gap for persons with tertiary education is slightly narrower in the EU for those aged 40–64 than the average for those aged 25–39, in part reflecting the fact that the older age group have fewer care responsibilities. In the EU as a whole, the employment rate of women with tertiary education aged 40–64 was around 6 percentage points lower than for men. The variation between countries is slightly wider in this group; from -1 percentage point in Sweden and Finland to 24 percentage points in Malta.

Low-educated women's employment rates differ widely among the EU-countries. In Portugal the rate of employment for women in the 25–39 age group is 73 %, while in Slovakia it is 21 %; and among women of 40–64 years it varies between 63 % in the UK to 17 % in Malta. The pattern is the same for women with secondary education, but at a higher level of employment and with smaller differences between women and men and between women in different age groups.

Women with only basic schooling are far more likely than men to be outside the labour market. Some women with low education may face problems in the labour market related to ethnicity, migrant status, language knowledge, etc. However, as the educational qualification level of women is increasing, female employment rates are also expected to rise in the future, and care responsibilities do not seem to be a great hindrance, since the employment rates of women with low education are higher than men's with a lower educational level.

Indicator 3a: The share of female ISCED 5a graduates exceeds that of men: 59 % and 41 % respectively. However, there are marked differences between the proportion of women and men in the different subject areas of ISCED 5a qualifications. Women predominate in five out of seven fields of study: teacher training and education; health and welfare; humanities and arts; social science, business and law, and agriculture and veterinary studies (see figures 4.2.5 and 4.2.6). The two other fields of study, i.e. science, mathematics and computing, and engineering, manufacturing and construction, are still dominated by men; the lower female proportion is more pronounced in the latter study field.

Teacher training and education science, humanities and arts, health and welfare, and social science, business and law are all female dominated study areas on the ISCED 5a level in all EU countries (Eurostat Education Indicators). In a majority of countries agriculture and veterinary studies are female dominated. Even science, mathematics and computing is a female dominated

area in some countries (CY, RO, BG, EE, IT). Engineering, manufacturing and construction is the only study area which is male dominated in all countries.

Among PhD graduates (ISCED 6) the choice of study area of women and men mirrors the situation at ISCED 5a level, but the proportion of women is lower and the proportion of men higher in all fields, which reveal a horizontal subject-related segregation and a simultaneous vertical segregation. Among PhD/Doctorate or equivalent students, men are in the majority at the EU27 level: men 56 % and women 44 %. However, in five countries women represent the majority of the total number of PhD/Doctorate or equivalent students (CY, EE, BG, PT, LV) and are very close to 50 % in many countries (SI, SK, ES, RO, FI, IE) (see figures 4.2.7 and 4.2.8).

In contrast to ISCED 5a level, no study area at ISCED 6 level is female dominated in any EU-country, but teacher training and education science comes very close: in only two countries are fewer than half the graduates women (RO, MT) (Eurostat Education Indicators).²⁶ But also in the areas of health and welfare, humanities and arts, social science, business and law, and agriculture and veterinary studies, women are in majority in many countries.

Indicator 3b: Data are from She Figures (2006) of the European Commission. The academic staff grades portray the link between the position in academic institutions, experience, and level of educational attainment:

Grade A: the single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted;

Grade B: researchers working in positions less senior than top positions (A) but more senior than newly qualified PhD holders; and

Grade C: the first grade/post into which a newly qualified PhD (ISCED6) graduate would normally be recruited.

Vertical gender segregation is prevalent in academia. While women at the beginning of their academic careers (grade C) account for 42 % of the total, a mere 15 % of grade A positions are occupied by women. Overall, men take the lion's share of grade A and B positions in academic institutions, with 85 % and 68 % respectively.

Women are the majority at grade C in five countries (LV, EE, FI, ES, LT) (Eurostat Education Indicators), this is not the case in any country at grade B, although two countries come very close to 50 % (RO, FI); in no country do women hold even a third of grade A positions.

²⁶. Data are lacking for a number of countries (EL, IT, LT, LU, NL, PL, DK).

4.2.4 Trends emphasised in Member States reporting to the UNECE

According to MS' reports, the educational level of women has risen substantially in recent decades. Whereas girls and young women used to lag behind boys and young men, they now more often choose higher education, graduate faster, remain in school to completion and often outperform boys overall. Today girls and women have an overall higher educational attainment than men. Girls and women (but not boys and men) have diversified their range of choices in scientific areas. Women predominate in teacher training and education, health and welfare, arts and humanities, agriculture and veterinary studies, and business, administration and law, and men predominate in science, mathematics and computing and in particular in technical studies, engineering and construction at ISCED 5-level. Men predominate in all areas at ISCED 6-level. However, there is an increase in the number of women succeeding at higher levels in non-traditional subjects.

In several MS stereotyped views of women and the impact of such stereotypes on educational choices have been addressed through projects consisting of training of teachers and other relevant education professionals, including through projects aiming at raising awareness of gender equality approaches and strengthening the competencies for the promotion of gender equality. One report (IE) mentions a booklet for students which provides examples of activities and ways in which students can contribute to their school's gender equality policy and to gender mainstreaming. Portugal reports that it has been investing in mainstreaming gender and addressing gender stereotypes in education for many years.

Several countries implement projects to encourage girls to pursue new career paths such as entrepreneurship and technology, many fewer MS mention projects encouraging boys to break stereotypes, however, there are reports (CY, DE) of projects aimed at encouraging boys to become more involved in family and private life.

In a number of reports, special educational needs are mentioned in relation to migrants, Roma and disabled people; it is also reported that while girls from ethnic minority groups perform better educationally and have higher scores than boys with the same background, they are still lagging behind girls of native origin (example from NL).

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4.3 WOMEN AND HEALTH (C)

4.3.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

Following the Beijing Platform for Action, women and health was defined as critical area C and associated with five strategic objectives:

- C.1 Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services
- C.2 Strengthen preventive programs that promote women's health
- C.3 Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues
- C.4 Promote research and disseminate information on women's health
- C.5 Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

4.3.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

The following indicators were developed by the Austrian Presidency and decided upon by the Council in June 2006:

- Indicator 1. Healthy life years (HLY)
- Indicator 2. Access to health care (unmet demand)
- Indicator 3. Cardio-vascular diseases

There is also ongoing work on constituting general health indicators which are available in all the EU countries in comparable data sets. The first set of health indicators for the European Union (ECHI 1 and 2) has been presented as a result of the ECHI project (2003–2008), together with a conceptual perspective on health and health factors (ECHI).

Indicator 1: measures the number of years that an individual, male or female, at birth is expected to live in good health, free from the limitations of illness or disability (Eurostat 2008). By using this concept, quality of life is merged into the notion of life expectancy. A similar indicator, used by Eurostat (Eurostat 2008), is healthy life years (HLY) calculated at the age of 65. Included in HLY are mortality figures as well as individuals' own evaluation of possible limitations due to illness or disability, as estimated in health surveys. Mortality tables are available for all EU countries, including calculations of life expectancy at birth. As chronic diseases and limitations due to illness or disability tend to become more frequent with increasing age, a population with higher life expectancy may not be healthier than one with a lower life expectancy.

Indicator 2: measures the proportion of men and women in the total population, aged 16 or older, who needed, but failed to obtain, an examination/treatment by a physician during the previous 12 months and the reasons therefore. In the EU-SILC investigation there are two indicators concerning access to health care which can be used; namely demands left unmet and the reasons for that. The following reasons for such unmet demands were given: could not afford it, time on waiting list, could not take time off from work, responsible for care of children or other relative, too far away/no transport available, fear of doctors, fear of hospitals, fear of treatment, wanted to wait and see if the problem disappeared with time, did not know a good doctor or specialist, other reasons. Socio-economic data from the other parts of the investigation can be combined with the findings in the indicators, such as age, sex, income group, educational level, activity status, profession, type of household, region and urban/rural place of living.

Having access to health care means that the individual's economic resources should not be a condition for obtaining care. Despite the fact that most EU inhabitants have access to basic health care, differences still remain, such as insufficient cover for special types of health care, geographical differences in access, waiting times, and lack of information. Different socio-economic groups also use health care in different ways, i.e. richer households tend to use preventive health care and specialist care more than poorer households, who use acute health care more. It is therefore relevant to analyse the obstacles to access to and utilisation of health care according to socio-economic groups, sex, and region. "Need of health care" is also a culturally constructed concept, which must be used with caution, as objectively very sick but poor persons might not even define themselves as being in need of health care, or might not participate in a survey.

Indicator 3: measures the proportion of women and men in a population who have died from cardio-vascular disease (ischemic coronary heart disease, stroke and other cardio-vascular diseases). The data behind this indicator are compiled from statistics based on the causes of death on death certificates, which all EU Member States are obliged to issue. A number of projects within the EU have worked on this indicator, including Eurosciss 1 and 2. In Eurosciss 2 work started 2003 on producing a list of European information sources, available indicators, and a description of the differences in methods of gathering data according to the recommendations set out in the European Community Health Indicators (ECHI II), which has an updated list of indicators for

reporting cardio-vascular diseases in relation to age and region (Eurosciss 1 and 2 ECHI II).

According to the Austrian report, cardio-vascular diseases are the most prevalent cause of death in the EU and represent more than 1.9 million deaths per year. Almost 32 % of all deaths in the EU in 2001 were caused by cardio-vascular disease (46 % of deaths among women and 39 % of deaths among men). Cardio-vascular disease is the most common cause of death among women in all EU countries. Ischemic coronary heart disease is the most common single cause of death in the EU; killing every tenth man and every seventh woman. Stroke is the second single most common cause of death in the EU, killing every tenth man and every eighth woman.

4.3.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data.

Data are available for 2006 from EU 25 countries (except IT and UK). There are great differences in healthy life years between countries for both men and women: the figures range from approximately 50 years minimum for men (EE) to almost 70 years maximum for women (MT) (figure 4.3.1). In more than half the countries, women have a higher HLY than men, with the greatest difference in Estonia and Poland, where women have 4 more HLY than men. Among countries where men have a higher HLY than women, the difference is largest in Portugal (2 years), followed by the Netherlands. In several countries the differences are small (figure 4.3.2).

Analyses of trends over a certain time period are difficult to assess due to the methodological differences in collecting data. Another measure (available in Eurostat) is HLY at age 65, which assesses the health of the older part of the population and may give an idea of the future health challenges facing the EU MS as the proportion of their elderly citizens grows.

Latvia had the greatest proportion of men and women with experience of unmet demands (figure 4.3.3). In a majority of countries the proportion of men and women with unmet demands varies between one and ten percent. In those Member States both men's and women's demands are met to the greatest extent in Slovenia,. In figure 4.3.4 the differences between women and men are further illustrated. In more than half of the countries the proportion of women is larger than the proportion of men with unmet demands; in seven countries the proportions are approximately the same, and in those four countries with the highest proportions of women with unmet demands the differences between the sexes are also the greatest. In Luxembourg the gap between the sexes is as large as in Poland – but reversed.

When the reasons for unmet demands are introduced into the statistics mentioned above, an interesting pattern emerges. Among those who have forced reasons for their unmet demands, the proportion of women is greater than the proportion of men in almost all countries; but less than one percent for more than half the countries (figure 4.3.5). Among those who chose themselves not to have their demands met, the proportion of men was larger than the proportion of women in a majority of countries (figure 4.3.6). Here, too, the differences were mostly small.

In all EU countries which presented data on the causes of death in 2006, a greater proportion of women than men died from cardio-vascular diseases (figure 4.3.7). Bulgaria was the country reporting the highest proportions of women and men dying from cardio-vascular disease (71 % of the women and 62 % of the men). The lowest proportions were found in France (31 % of the women and 26 % of the men). The differences between the proportions of women and men who die from cardio-vascular diseases are shown in figure 4.3.8. Among the five countries with the highest proportions of women dying from cardio-vascular diseases (figure 4.3.7), four had the largest differences between women and men (figure 4.3.8).

4.3.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

In many EU countries preventive programmes addressing women's health issues have been set up, such as screening for breast cancer, cervical cancer and for HIV infection among pregnant women. In a few countries, the vaccination of girls against HPV virus infections and future cervical cancer has been launched. Attitudes to contraception and legal abortion vary between countries, as do the laws and the investment of society in terms of allocating resources.

A few countries have taken measures to combat the "multi-marginalisation" of women. For instance being a disabled, Roma, low-educated woman places the individual in an extremely subordinate but undeserved position, from which she has to struggle to be treated on equal terms. Finland reports on special measures (in the form of the Act on Safeguarding Equality) that have been undertaken to combat multiple discrimination due to combinations of e.g. ethnic minority status, disability and gender. The UK has also developed a programme to reduce inequality and multiple discrimination in access to health care.

Ill-health due to domestic violence is mentioned as a major issue in many of the country reports. Legal abortion rates are not reported by all countries but

vary widely among the EU countries giving information, ranging from 26.3 per 1000 women aged 15-49 in Estonia (2007) and 14.5 in France.

In Latvia, as in several other Eastern European countries, men have a worse health status than women, e.g. in terms of life expectancy, HLY, smoking habits, alcoholism, suicide and accidents. National programmes are addressing this gender gap, trying to improve the situation of men. Malta has a health care system free of charge and presents the highest levels of HLY in the EU for both sexes.

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4.4 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (D)

4.4.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

Following the Beijing Platform for Action, violence against women was defined as critical area D and associated with three strategic objectives:

- D.1 Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.
- D.2 Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.
- D.3 Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

4.4.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

The Council decided in November 2002 and 2004 on three indicators to be used when monitoring progress in this area:

- Indicator 1. The number of female victims of domestic violence;
- Indicator 2. The number of employees who report incidents of sexual harassment at the workplace, as a percentage of the total workforce;
- Indicator 3. The number of private and public enterprises which have a preventive policy regarding sexual harassment at the workplace, as a percentage of the total number of employers.

In 2002, the Spanish Presidency carried out a study mapping the measures to combat violence against women. On the basis of this preparatory work the Danish Presidency suggested (in 2002) seven indicators concerning “domestic violence against women” (profile of female victims; profile of male perpetrators; victim support; measures addressing the male perpetrator to end the cycle of violence; training of professionals; state measures to eliminate domestic violence against women; and evaluation), with sub-indicators. The aim was to develop indicators that can facilitate an evaluation of the implementation of the Beijing PfA, as well as to promote the exchange of best practice, help evaluate the measures used (including policy measures), and facilitate awareness-raising initiatives regarding violence against women.

When the Council adopted the indicators and its conclusions on domestic violence in November 2002 it thus noted that the theme of violence against women could be revisited to deal with other perspectives and other target groups. The Irish Presidency carried out a survey amongst Member States regarding sexual harassment and, on the basis of this work, during the Dutch

Presidency the Council adopted two indicators concerning sexual harassment in the workplace in November 2004.

There are limitations to the extent to which EU wide indicators can be used to monitor progress towards the first and second strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform. Furthermore, no indicators have been developed to monitor progress towards the strategic objective to eliminate trafficking in women and to assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

4.4.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

The Eurostat database does not include statistics on violence against women specifically, and the statistics that are available in the database, such as the number of murders and violent crimes, do not include information about gender (Statistics Sweden 2009a). Currently no comparable statistics from the Member States are available on violence against women. At the moment, there are two main potential sources of information regarding this issue. One source is information from the different agencies (e.g. the police and legal system, agencies within the health sector, the social services, refuges for women subjected to violence etc.); the other is national prevalence surveys.

In relation to the scope of the problem of violence against women, and the assessment of change over time, the first information source is problematic for several reasons, including the fact that only a minor proportion of the cases of violence is reported to the police or is known by any other agency. In addition, the size of the hidden figures is hard to assess and patterns in reporting violence may vary over time. As regards the second source, national prevalence surveys have been carried out in a significant proportion of the 27 MS over the last 15 years. However, the methodological differences between these surveys make the results hard to compare (cf. United Nations et al. 2006).

This was one of the conclusions drawn from a review of prevalence surveys from eleven European countries (eight MS²⁷), carried out within an EC Framework 6 funded project assessing the state of European research on the prevalence of interpersonal violence (Martinez and Schröttle et al. 2006).

The review indicated that the lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by current and/or former partners ranges from 4 % to over 30 %, and the research team argues that the comparatively high rates found in studies from Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are a possible effect of the measures used in those studies to uncover intimate part-

27. In England and Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden.

ner violence. However, as this EC Framework 6 project also shows, some studies used in common certain well-known instruments to assess physical violence, such as a modified version of the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al. 1996) or the list of acts used in the Statistics Canada Violence Against Women survey (Johnson 1996).²⁸ This makes it possible to compare the prevalence rates of at least some forms of violence through re-analysis of the data (Schröttle and Martinez et al. 2006).²⁹ It can also be noted that when it comes to sexual violence, the instruments used differ widely between studies; the instruments vary even more in the case of psychological violence. Furthermore, there is even less comparable data available regarding violence against disabled women, older women, and gay/lesbian/bisexual women. For example, in most studies, women with an immigrant background are under-represented in the sample used in those studies. Moreover, only few studies, such as the one carried out in Germany in 2003, have conducted interviews in different languages in order to increase the participation of this group of women (see Martinez and Schröttle et al. 2006).

Without systematically gathered, comparable data on all forms of violence against women (domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, forced marriage, trafficking), it becomes very difficult to explore the efficacy of the Member States' legal frameworks in addressing violence against women. When it is not possible to track cases across the criminal justice systems, it is difficult to assess whether any improvements in reporting and levels of prosecution have occurred.

A positive sign was the creation of expert groups at EU level in order to develop indicators and data on violence against women, following the adoption by the European Commission of a communication on "Developing a comprehensive EU strategy to measure crime and criminal justice"³⁰.

28. E.g. England and Wales (Walby and Mayhill 2001), Finland (Heiskanen and Piispa 1998),

Germany (Schröttle and Müller 2003), Lithuania (2000), Sweden (Lundgren et al 2002).

29. For example, reanalysis of the datasets from selected studies indicates that the lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by current or former partners is 29,9% in Finland, 28,9% in Germany, 37,6% in Lithuania, and 21,4% in Sweden, amongst women in the age group 20–59 years (Schröttle and Martinez et al 2006).

30. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee of 7 August 2006 – Developing a comprehensive and coherent EU strategy to measure crime and criminal justice: an EU Action Plan 2006-2010, COM (2006) 437 final.

4.4.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

MS' reporting to the UNECE emphasises that violence against women remains an issue central to political agendas. Many MS aim at a more coordinated approach in tackling violence against women, and at least half have developed national strategies or plans of action on this issue. Continued development in policy and practice can be seen, especially when it comes to the criminalisation of violence and protection and support to victims. For example, many countries have now followed the innovative step taken by Austria in 1996 when legislation was introduced there allowing the police to take positive action at a domestic violence incident to exclude the perpetrator of violence from the home. With six more MS (BG, CZ, EL, HU, LU, PL, SK) reporting the introduction of similar measures in the period 2005–2009, the “order to go” can be considered a trend within the MS.³¹

Some of the measures that have been introduced by the MS aim at more efficient policing or court procedures (for example the specialist public prosecutor for violence against women and district courts for cases of violence in Spain, and the domestic violence courts introduced in the United Kingdom); others expand the scope of criminalised forms of violence, as is the case with laws on stalking reported by five States (AT, CZ, DE, LU, SI) or forced marriages reported by two States (AT, UK). In terms of criminalising violence, holding perpetrators accountable and demanding changes in behaviour, it can be noted that some states report activities aimed at violent men/domestic violence perpetrators. The issue of quality control of work with perpetrators and minimum standards for practice ensuring the safety of victims is hardly mentioned in the reporting to the UNECE.

Victim support is clearly one area of development. A new measure recurring in the reports is a national toll-free phone line for victims subjected to domestic violence, implemented in at least six member states in the period 2005–2009. Some countries have introduced new networks of crisis centres or other institutional structures to ensure availability throughout the country (PT) and more systematic work with minimum standards for victim support and/or knowledge development (PT, HU). The MS continue to work in close cooperation with NGOs to support victims of violence.

Another overall pattern is that, so far, intimate partner or domestic violence has received far more attention than other forms of violence against women, most notably sexual violence. However, some countries (BE, SE, UK)

31. In the Beijing +10 report, nine MS (not mentioned) reported such measures.

report legal reforms, measures to improve criminal law proceedings and/or improved victim support in this area. There are thus differences between Member States when it comes to the forms of violence that have attracted attention in recent years. For instance, financial abuse and the economic consequences of violence against women, both at a societal level and in the lives of women subjected to violence, are given far more attention in reporting by France than any other Member State. Other examples are the attention paid to children exposed to violence against women, violence against older women, violence against disabled women, violence in same-sex relationships, or violence against immigrant women or women from ethnic minorities. As regards the latter, it can be noted that two MS report special national action plans on this issue (RO on Roma women and ES on ethnic minority women) and some examples of policy development regarding violence in the name of honour can also be seen. In Sweden, the 2007 national plan of action to combat violence against women included honour-related violence and oppression, and in Austria, a violence-prevention campaign in 2008 included material on this form of violence. A tentative conclusion that can be drawn from these examples is that there may be a growing recognition within the EU MS of diversity both as regards forms of violence against women and women subjected to violence.

When looking at the reporting of progress in policy areas other than criminal law and specialised violence work, it becomes clear that the development of integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women remains a challenge. Some scholars in the field have pointed out contradictions between different aspects of policy on violence against women and children, often leading to contradictory outcomes and lack of safety-oriented practice (e.g. Eriksson and Hester 2001; Hester 2004; Humphreys and Carter et al. 2006). Underpinning this analysis is the observation that different policy domains tend to have their own separate cultures and professionals, with different institutional discourses and practices that create difficulties in linking the work on victim protection and support, with, for example, child protection, family law proceedings, or practice in relation to immigration and asylum-seeking.

A challenge for the future is the creation of a strong focus on evaluating the work in this field. Some MS' reports suggest an increase in the attention paid to monitoring and evaluation of policy and practice. In many countries awareness-raising campaigns have been organised, directed at professionals, the general public, and/or special target groups such as young people. In addition, many different examples of training of professionals have been provided. Even so, it is unclear how systematic such training has been, to what extent training has

improved practice, to what extent general attitudes to violence against women have changed, and so forth. In terms of evaluating policy and practice, two countries report a decrease in the prevalence of violence against women (DK, UK).

The reporting to the UNECE shows that the commitment to combating violence against women includes the issue of trafficking, and that most Member States report some measures to tackle trafficking in women and to assist victims of violence due to prostitution and/or trafficking. Thirteen MS (BG, CY, DK, EE, ES, FI, HU, IE, LV, LT, PT, RO, SE) have developed or are in the process of developing national plans or strategies of action specifically on trafficking. Five MS (CY, IE, LU, MT, PT) report the introduction of a specific crime in the period 2005–2009.

A number of Member States report preventative campaigns, guidelines, handbooks and training for professionals and the development of services for victims of violence due to trafficking and/or prostitution. Not least, Member States in Central and Eastern Europe tend to report significant progress in this area. One example is Estonia, which reports that work under Nordic-Baltic cooperation in the period 2005–2008 has resulted in the development of specialist social and psychological support for trafficked women/women in prostitution in the framework of shelter service. Some of these measures are reported by other countries as well (BG, LV, LT). An observation that can be made is that the reports from Member States from the Northern and Western parts of Europe tend to place emphasis on trafficking as a crime, rather than on support to victims of violence due to trafficking or prostitution. Another observation is that reporting to the UNECE does not provide enough information to provide a systematic overview of the extent to which the Member States have implemented the Palermo Protocol and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Finally, although two of the three indicators developed by the EU focus upon sexual harassment in the workplace, only a minority of the Member States have included information about this issue when reporting to the UNECE. Since there are no statistics available in the Eurostat database, and very little information in the country reports, it is impossible to draw any conclusions in relation to these indicators.

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4.5 WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT (E)

4.5.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

- E.1 Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
- E.2 Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
- E.3 Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
- E.4 Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace
- E.5 Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women
- E.6 Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories

4.5.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

When the Beijing + 10 report was published, no indicators had been developed for the strategic objectives on women and armed conflict. During the French Presidency in 2008 a study was commissioned and an ambitious questionnaire sent to MS. On the basis of the data gathered, the following indicators were developed and decided upon in the Council in December 2008:

- Indicator 1. Proportion of men and women trained specifically in gender equality among diplomatic staff, civilian and military staff employed by the Member States and Community institutions and military and police staff participating in UN peacekeeping operations and ESDP missions.
- Indicator 2. Proportion of women and men among heads of diplomatic missions and EC delegations, staff participating in UN peacekeeping operations and ESDP missions, including military and police staff.
- Indicator 3. Funding (as a total amount and as a percentage of cooperation programmes) allocated by the Member States and the European Commission, in countries affected by armed conflict or in post-conflict situations to support gender equality, to support female victims of violence and the participation of women in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.
- Indicator 4. Proportion and country of origin of female and male asylum seekers who have obtained the status of refugee, or benefit from subsidiary protection.

It is clear from the discussions in the French Presidency report that the indicators are a first step in trying to measure progress in this field. They only address some of the strategic objectives in this area. This topic spans a broad field of activities, which can be divided into three subfields. One subfield concerns what MS do within the EU. This raises questions whether sectors such as defence, security and foreign policy are gender balanced and how gender mainstreaming activities have been organised. This is the focus of indicators 1 and 2. Another subfield regards MS and the EU in relation to third countries and asks: how are gender issues taken into account when EU MS come to the rescue or intervene in third countries? Do MS consider gender-related violence when they receive refugees from violent areas in third countries? Are processes of mediation, peace building and reconstruction gender mainstreamed? Do MS and EU personnel deployed in third countries treat local women and men with gender awareness in mind? Indicator 3 and 4 are concerned with this subfield. There is a third subfield, the promotion of a culture of peace, of non-violence and the reduction of military spending and availability of armaments corresponding to Beijing strategic objectives E 2–E 4, for which no indicators have been developed.

Indicator 1: measures how many staff members have undergone gender training. No quantitative data are available for this indicator. The French Presidency's survey did not address this indicator in quantitative terms but in terms of yes/no.

Indicator 2: measures the balance between men and women in areas that are relevant to decision- and policy-making and to activities related to armed conflict and conflict resolution. Eurostat data are limited.

Indicator 3: no data are available.

Indicator 4: is concerned with the treatment of refugees. The data provided on how many refugees are accepted and the number of women and men are limited.

4.5.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

In a set of questions in the French Presidency the survey, MS were asked whether they had trained staff involved in the areas of conflict and peace to take a gender approach. Seventeen MS said they had. Asked whether they had carried out gender mainstreaming in international actions, 19 MS said they had implemented action in the area of women and armed conflict. Questions

were asked regarding 18 specific areas; as many as 15 MS had taken action in at least half of these areas. Thus, regarding indicator 1 it seems that action is being taken by many MS and that gender mainstreaming is being carried out in the area of military, defence and security although the extent of the activities in numerical terms is not known.

On the number of women employed in the armed forces in 2007 there are Eurostat figures for only 8 MS. The French Presidency's survey collected data on this indicator in 2008, and there is data from NATO countries from 2007. The conclusion to be drawn from these data is that the gender gap in the MS' armed forces is enormous. The armed forces of all MS are almost completely dominated by men. In Finland and Poland men account for 99 %. Ten MS report 10 % or fewer women among the staff of their Armed Forces. The highest share of women in the armed forces (20 % and 17 %) is to be found in Hungary and Latvia.

European military forces are and have historically been completely dominated by men. There are often different expectations of the citizenship of men and women in relationship to military activities. Most often women have not been required or allowed to do military service. This is clearly evident in conscription, which limits women's possibilities of pursuing a military career.

According to the statistics gathered by the French Presidency, the gender imbalance is further accentuated when staff of the MS' armed forces are sent abroad. The percentage of women participating in international missions is consistently lower than their representation in the MS' armed forces. It ranges from less than 1 % (LV, MT) to 10 % (SE). The only exception is Sweden, with 4,5 % women in the national armed forces and 10 % in international missions.

Another part of indicator 2 deals with the gender balance in diplomatic missions. The French Presidency asked the MS to provide the percentages of female staff among diplomats, ambassadors and diplomatic missions. In the diplomatic service of the 22 EU MS that reported on this question, the EU average is 38 % women. Women's representation in the diplomatic service ranges from 14 % (IT) to 67 % (LV). When it comes to ambassadors the gender gap widens. The EU average is 13, 5% women ambassadors, ranging from 4,5 % (DE, PT) to 20 % (LV).

In the French survey only eleven MS provided figures concerning the treatment of refugees. The number of refugees accepted by the MS vary dramatically from 15 (SK) to 36 207 (SE) making it problematic to compare their efforts. The data on the gender balance of refugees show that male refugees predomi-

nate. Most MS grant refugee status to the victims of gender-based violence but only eight of the MS' refugee administrations have policies that take account of gender aspects.

4.5.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

The extremely low representation of women in international missions is problematic when considering the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform as well as UN SCR 1325. Both these international commitments stress that local women need to be engaged in conflict resolution, in peace negotiations and the peace-building processes. International missions are deployed to help initiate such processes, often in patriarchal societies where women have a restricted role and, for example, are only allowed to speak to women. With no or very few women in the missions this objective cannot possibly be attained. When international missions are dominated by men, dialogue and cooperation with women and their inclusion in conflict resolution and peace building cannot be accomplished.

Gender imbalances in national armed forces and security-related national institutions are carried over to other institutions, activities and contexts, because the MS provide the personnel for these. MS provide the personnel for peace-keeping missions in the UN, NATO and EU contexts but also for decision-making positions in these institutions, for example the EU Security and Defence institutions, and the EU Military Committee, whose members are the MS' Chiefs of Defence and all men. As a result this 'new' institution has also become male dominated. Other examples are the EU battle groups, multilateral rapid deployment units staffed and organised by different MS but operating under the EU flag. One example is the Nordic Battle Group (NBG), the EU Battle Group on standby during the first half of 2008 and led by Sweden's armed forces. In the NBG, gender issues were taken seriously from the start. It included gender training and a gender advisor who was directly responsible to the top commander. The ambition was to recruit around 20 % of women, even so, in the end only 5 % of the NBG force were women (Kronsell forthcoming).

It is notable that the majority of MS' responses to UNECE questions make no mention of the EU indicators on women in armed conflict nor do they acknowledge the data and considerations provided by the MS for the French Presidency's survey (2008). Only the French report makes explicit reference to the indicators that have been developed.

Feminists and gender researchers argue (e.g. Reardon 1996; Cockburn 2004) that there is a continuum of violence that connects the violence against women

in the home with patriarchy and with the institutions of war, i.e. the military. An example is that when soldiers return home from war with post traumatic stress, they tend to take out their anger and frustration through violence, often directed toward women and children in the family. There is ample research in the US showing this (e.g. Committee on Gulf War and Health 2008). In the 1990s there was a war in Europe; soldiers from the MS were part of the coalition forces in the war in Iraq, and many have been deployed in international missions in the Balkans, on the African continent and in Afghanistan. They have experienced violence, and, when they return home, many may suffer from post traumatic stress. The connection between violence against women and men's and women's different and separate experience of armed conflict, war and the armed forces is not raised in the MS' reports to the UNECE.

The connection between military activities and prostitution has been widely documented (Enloe 2007). UN SCR 1325 and 1820 are a response to the scandal and problem of abuse of women and children through prostitution around peacekeeping missions. Armed forces stationed abroad and peacekeeping missions (Higate 2004) seem to play an important role in generating trafficking in women and children for sexual purposes.

It is clear from the MS' reports to the UNECE that many countries are very concerned with and try to take measures against trafficking for sexual purposes. Yet, the Belgian report is the only one which explicitly connects the problem of trafficking in women with the strategic objective of women and armed conflict and points to the work done in Belgium specifically related to Congo. Belgium has taken specific action, promoted the adoption of complementary resolution 1820 (2008) in the UN Security Council and set up a group within the UN Security Council of countries, UNIFEM and some NGOs. Germany supported the drafting of the report on Resolution 1820 by providing funding. What is relevant to the issue of trafficking is the behaviour of the staff of international missions. According to the French Presidency's report, three MS (ES, NL, SE) refer explicitly to the use of codes of conduct for international missions. Codes of conduct regulate the behaviour of peacekeepers; military and civilian personnel toward the local population, when they are deployed in third countries. Some forbid any type of sexual relationship with the local population. In the French report 15 MS say they "carry out actions to prevent sexual abuse and the use of prostitutes and trafficking in women and children for male staff in police, humanitarian and diplomatic services". Except for Belgium and Germany, the MS make no reference to this in their reports to the UNECE on the Beijing strategic objectives.

There is no shortage of international commitments in the area of women and armed conflict. Apart from the Beijing strategic objectives, gender-based violence is considered a violation of fundamental human rights, in the Geneva conventions regulating warfare, women are protected against rape, forced prostitution and other gender-based violence. Furthermore, the CEDAW convention, the Statute of the International Criminal Court, UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 all deal with related issues and objectives. While an international system of norms has been developed that suggests strategies and sanctions in this field, implementation continues to be weak. UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is the international norm that reflects most comprehensively Beijing Platform for Action strategic objectives in this area and resolution 1820 (2008) particularly reinforces the commitment to take action against sexual violence against women during armed conflict. These two resolutions closely correspond to some PfA strategic objectives. The French Presidency's report discusses actions taken in the MS in response to UNSCR 1325.

To date, 10 of the 27 MS have developed National Action Plans for UNSCR 1325, and one MS (PL) is in the planning process. As always with international norms, these are set at a general level so as to be as inclusive as possible. It is apparent from MS' reports that there are many different ways of implementing these resolutions, in terms of programmes, institutional structures, and relations with civil society and other actors. It is also evident from some MS' reports to the UNECE that the MS see the connection with UNSCR 1325, as under the heading of women and armed conflict they refer exclusively to the work they have done in developing NAPs on that resolution. The qualitative data provided by the French Presidency's report on its survey also emphasises work in relation to UNSCR 1325.

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4.6 WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY (F)

4.6.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

The theme of women and the economy was made critical area F by the Beijing action platform. It was linked as follows to six strategic objectives:

- F.1 Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
- F.2 Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.
- F.3 Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
- F.4 Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
- F.5 Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
- F.6 Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

4.6.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators:

The EU has identified eighteen indicators for measuring the integration of women in the economy. In 2000 the Council adopted nine indicators and reduced them to seven in the 2008 review. Of the nine indicators adopted by the Council in 2001 only the gender pay gap with different breakdowns (employment and unemployment rates) is presented here:

- Indicator 1. Employed men and women on parental leave (paid and unpaid) within the meaning of Directive 96/34/EC on the framework agreement between the social partners on parental leave, as a proportion of all employed parents.
- Indicator 2. Allocation of parental leave between employed men and women as a proportion of all parental leave.
- Indicator 3. Children cared for (other than by the family) as a proportion of all children of the same age group: before entry into the non-compulsory pre-school system (during the day); in the non-compulsory or equivalent pre-school system (outside pre-school hours); in compulsory primary education (outside school hours).
- Indicator 4. Comprehensive and integrated policies, particularly employment policies, aimed at promoting a balance between working and family life for both men and women (including for example, a description of avail-

able child care facilities, parental leave and flexible working arrangements of services offered by companies for their employees and of flexible opening hours of public services such as local authority offices, post offices, crèches and shops).

- Indicator 5. Dependent elderly men and women (unable to look after themselves on a daily basis) over 75: living in specialised institutions; who have help (other than the family) at home; looked after by the family as a proportion of men and women over 75.
- Indicator 6. Total “tied” time per day for each employed parent living with a partner, having one or more children under 12 years old or a dependent: paid working time; travelling time; basic time spent on domestic work; other time devoted to the family (upbringing and care of children and care of dependent adults).
- Indicator 7. Total “tied” time per day for each employed parent living alone, having one or more children under 12 years old or a dependent: paid working time; travelling time; basic time spent on domestic work; other time devoted to the family (upbringing and care of children and care of dependent adults).
- Indicator 8. Employment rates (women and men)
- Indicator 9. Unemployment rates (women and men)
- Indicator 10. The gap between women’s and men’s gross hourly wages, breakdown in private/public sector, in age 16–24, 25–54, 55–64, in educational level and monthly wage.

The strategic objectives are expressed in terms of policies, while the indicators are spoken of as outcomes, i.e. the indicators measure outcomes rather than the strategies by which they are achieved. This is in line with the nature of the open method of co-ordination, whereby MS agree on objectives but are left free to choose the policies by which these objectives are to be met. In some cases it is possible to see the connection between the strategic objective and the indicator, e.g. F.1 and F.2 and Indicators 8 and 9, and F.6 and Indicators 1 and 2. It is harder to relate F.3, F.4 and F.5 directly to any of the indicators.

There are data available for all the indicators except indicator 5. However, some are not unproblematic, which will be discussed in connection with the closer presentation of each indicator.

4.6.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

Indicator 1: Following the 1996 European Directive, all employed parents have a right to at least three months' (not necessarily paid) leave at the birth of a child. This leave is separate from maternity leave for mothers and from paternity leave for fathers where it exists; maternity leave varies between 14 and 20 weeks depending on the country, and is always paid (at 60 to 100 % of prior salary). In certain countries, maternity leave is integrated into parental leave (SE, PT) and may be shared with the father (ES).

An overview of the situation in the EU reveals wide diversity in parental leave in terms of both duration and payment. Parental leave varies from 13/14 weeks (the minimum) in the United Kingdom and Ireland to three years in nine MS (CZ, DE, ES, FR, HU, LT, LV, PL, SK). It is unpaid in seven countries (although in some countries there exist collective agreements on paid parental leave), of which five are old MS (ES, EL, IE, NL, UK); paid at a low rate in seven more (AT, BE, CZ, FR, IT, PL, SK); and paid for the whole duration or a defined part of the parental leave as a percentage of previous salary in eight MS (DE, DK, EE, FI, LT, LU, LV, SE, SI). Data not available for BG and RO.

Eurostat have published some data on employed men and women on maternity and parental leave, but data are not available for all countries and the data, especially concerning fathers, seem uncertain. For employed women with children below 8 years, the highest proportion is found in Austria, almost 20 % (see figure 4.6.i). In three more countries the proportion is higher than 10 %, while in five countries the proportion is less than 4 %. In no country is the proportion of employed fathers with children below the age of 8 on parental leave higher than 1% and in most cases it is 0 %.

Indicator 2: Today many countries have different ways of encouraging fathers to take parental leave, however, regardless of the system in place, parental leave remains very female-dominated.

The data is uncertain and, at least in some cases, it is not correct and therefore it is at this stage unsuitable for indicator 2. Yet a general preliminary conclusion is that when parental leave is more equally divided between the parents, it is because mothers' leaves are short, not because of any equality gains because fathers' leaves are long. In many countries fathers have a right to paternity leave around the time of birth. This leave is often paid and is to be taken at the same time as the mother is on maternity leave. When the fathers use these days, which seems to be common, and if mothers' leave is short, the parental leave appears to be more equally divided than when mother's leave is longer.

There are also EU-SILC data, which show the proportion of children taken care of only by the parents, i.e. they are cared for mainly by their mothers and are not in any formal or other arrangement of childcare. In this respect there are big differences between EU countries. In five countries less than 30 % of children aged 0-3 are taken care of only by parents; in six countries between 30 and 50 % are taken care of only by parents; in five countries more than half the children but less than 70 % are taken care of only by parents and in the remaining six countries 70 % or more of the children are taken care of only by parents (see figure 4.6.2). The proportion of children in this age group that are taken care of only by parents probably mainly depends on the length of the maternity/parental leave, the extent to which it is paid and the availability of childcare. In the Nordic countries formal childcare is widely available. In Finland, where parents can be on leave until the child is three years old, a very large proportion of the children in that age group are taken care of only by parents (70 %), in Sweden parental leave is 16 months and more than half (52 %) of the children are taken care of only by their parents and in Denmark the corresponding figures are 10.5 months and 26 %.

Among older children as well – from 3 years old to compulsory school age – the variation in the proportion of children who are taken care of only by their parents is large between countries – from 1 % in Belgium to 46 % in Poland. In twelve countries, the proportion is below 10 %; in seven countries from 10 % up to and including 20 %; over 20 % in six countries.

Indicator 3: There are harmonised EU statistics on the provision of (formal and other) childcare arrangements within the context of the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC).

At the Barcelona summit in 2002 childcare targets were set. Member States should strive to provide childcare by 2010 for at least 90 % of all children between 3 years old and compulsory school age and at least 33 % of all children below 3 years of age.

Available, accessible, affordable and high quality childcare is extremely important for working parents. Throughout EU the availability of childcare varies widely. Data indicate that some countries have widespread formal childcare arrangements, whereas others rely on more informal arrangements such as childminders, family, friends and neighbours. In the age category 0-2 years old, the use of formal childcare arrangements varies from 73 % in Denmark to 2 % in Poland and the Czech Republic. It appears that nine MS have met the Barcelona target of at least 33 % of children under 3 years of age in childcare

(see figure 4.6.3). One problem is that it is not known to what extent formal childcare arrangements are compatible with both parents working. In the Netherlands and the UK, for example, a very large proportion of the children in formal childcare attend less than 30 hours per week, while in Denmark and Portugal a very large majority of children are in formal childcare for 30 hours or more. In some countries other arrangements for childcare are more common than formal childcare in this age group (see figure 4.6.4). If the proportion of children in formal and other arrangements and children only cared for by the parents are added together, the proportion in some countries amounts to more than 100 %, which indicates that parents in some countries have to rely on more than one form of childcare. It must be pointed out that the different parental leave schemes in the MS must be taken into consideration when the information in figures 4.6.3 and 4.6.4 is interpreted.

The availability of formal care arrangements increases with the age of children. Within the age category 3 years old to compulsory school age, Belgium ranks highest with a use of formal childcare of almost 100 % (see figure 4.6.5). At the other end is Poland with 28 %. According to the Barcelona target the actual coverage rate should be at least 90 % in 2010. It seems as if eight MS meet the Barcelona target and two are very close. When these figures are interpreted, it has to be taken into account that in most countries pre-school is only part-time, which means that working parents still need additional childcare facilities which may be much less readily available and that children have to be moved from one place to another. In many countries, furthermore, a majority of the children in this group are in formal childcare for less than 30 hours. This indicates that the mothers are not working full-time.

It should be emphasised that the high availability of childcare in this age group is to a large extent due to the inclusion of official pre-school arrangements. In this age category we also find that many parents have to rely on other childcare arrangements or a combination of formal and other arrangements (see figure 4.6.6). In the Nordic countries formal childcare – together with parental care – seems to cover the needs in both age categories, while in Slovenia, the Netherlands, Hungary and Cyprus, parents rely heavily on other child care arrangements.

Indicator 4: This indicator is the only one proposing a qualitative approach based on the MS implementing policies in favour of work-life balance. The evaluation report drawn up by the French Presidency relied on work by experts in the European Commission's gender and employment network,

who produced *Reconciliation of work and family life* (Plantenga and Remery 2006) based on national reports. In this Beijing +15 follow up report reference is made only to that publication and to the summary presented by the French Presidency for further information.

Indicator 5: Harmonised data covering this indicator for the EU-countries are not available. However, data taken from different sources are presented in the French Presidency report which gives some information regarding the situation in some of the EU15 countries, in particular help for aged persons who lose their self-sufficiency. The lack of data is indicative of the weak institutional provision for such care. Available data seem to show that recourse to institutions in most countries is low. In France 1 %, Austria 2 %, UK 4 %, Netherlands 5 % and Sweden 8 % of dependent persons live in institutions. Other data show that 96 % of dependent elderly people are supported by their families in France, 95 % in Spain, 87 % in Italy, 83 % in Germany and 79 % in the Netherlands and Sweden. The involvement of children is higher when the parent has no spouse.

An investigation of the dependent elderly in the newer MS show that they have not yet been confronted with the problem of elderly dependency on the same scale as in EU15 countries (Mette 2006). The provision of care for the dependent elderly appears to be better in Malta and Slovenia than in other countries. They have a high number of long-term care facilities and nurses per inhabitant. Poland also appears to be better placed than most of the other newer MS, spends a considerable proportion of its GDP on the aged and has a higher number of long-term care beds. The three Baltic States are distinguishable from the others in that the GDP share allocated to the dependent elderly is low despite the fact they are expected to be among the countries with the oldest population in coming decades.

Indicator 6: There are no harmonised data on time-use for all EU Member States since such surveys are not compulsory at EU level. However, there is a database which was created by HETUS, the harmonised European time use surveys (conducted between 1999 and 2004 depending on the country). A database with comparable or almost comparable data representing 14 EU countries (plus Norway) has been set up. Data are not, however, broken down for children up to the age of 12. The data is broken down for children aged 0–6 and 7–17 years.

Average “tied time” (paid working time + domestic work time + travelling time) differs from close to 9 hours to 11 hours and 15 minutes a day for mothers

in different countries. The longest tied time is found in some newer MS and in Italy (see figure 4.6.7). The gender gap in “tied time” is biggest in Estonia, where it is almost 3 hours. Among couples with pre-school children men’s tied time is slightly longer than women’s in Germany, Spain, Sweden, Bulgaria and France. The reason why women’s tied time is long in the Baltic States is that their paid working time is long, while this is not the case in Italy. There women spend a lot of time on domestic work instead(see figures 4.6.8 and 4.6.9). The times women and men spend on travelling do not differ very much in most countries, but men usually spend more time travelling than women.

Among working couples with older children, tied time for women differs between around 9 hours and 11 hours and 15 minutes (see figure 4.6.10). In this category, women’s tied time is longer than men’s in almost all countries. The gender gap pattern is otherwise very similar; women have long tied time and the reasons are the same as in the families with smaller children. Mothers in this category spend less time doing domestic work than mothers with pre-school children. The number of hours varies between 3 hours and 4.5 hours, while pre-school mothers spend between 3.5 and 6 hours on the same tasks. In both categories, however, the gender gap is about the same size, from slightly more than 1 hour to more than 3 hours.

Indicator 7: The same data are used here as for indicator 6 but, since the number of single fathers is low, only four countries have data for them. Instead, single working mothers’ time use is compared with that of married/cohabiting working mothers. The children in the first category are 0–17 years of age and in the second category either 0–6 or 7–17 years of age, which means that the groups are not fully comparable.

In most countries single mothers’ total tied time is lower than that of cohabiting/married mothers’, which may be surprising (see figure 4.6.11) We could assume that if there are two parents they can share the work with the children and also the paid work, but it might also be that a man in the house means more domestic work for the woman and possibly less time spent on paid work. There are differences in the length of time mothers in different countries spend on paid work: less in Belgium, the UK and Germany, and more in the Baltic states (see figure 4.6.12). In most countries the average difference between single mothers and cohabiting mothers with children 7–17 years of age is small, cohabiting/married mothers with pre-school children usually working fewer hours for pay. If instead we look at the time spent doing domestic work, we find that in most countries single mothers spend less time

on these tasks than mothers with school children, while pre-school mothers in most countries spend more time on them(see figure 4.6.13).

Indicator 8: Data used are from the Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and show the number of employed persons aged 15-64 as a percentage of the total population in the same age category. It should be pointed out, however, that comparisons of headcount measures of employment by gender overestimate women's employment and underestimate the gender employment gap in all countries, as they take no account of the higher incidence of part-time employment and absence from work of women. Another way of looking at gender gaps in employment is to calculate them on a full-time equivalent basis. Such a measure takes into account the gender distribution of part-time work which could be considered a key indicator of gender equality. In some ways, the availability of part-time work has facilitated the reconciliation of work and parenthood. However, in most countries, part-time work remains "women's work", reinforcing the traditional gender division of labour.

The Lisbon European Council of 2000 specifically stated that the overall aim of employment and economic policies should be to raise the employment rate to as close to 70 % as possible by 2010 and to increase the employment rate for women to more than 60 % by the same year.

In 2007, 15 MS met the 2010 employment rate target for women (AT, EE, CY, DE, DK, FI, FR, IE, LT, LV, NL, PT, SE, SI, UK). Among the remaining MS, the gap remains above 10 percent in Greece and Italy and as high as 24 percent in Malta (see figure 4.6.14). If the total employment rate in EU is to reach 70 % by 2010 and women's employment rate 60 %, then men's employment rate has to be closer to 80 %. However, only three countries have reached 80 % or more for men (CY, DK, NL), while eight have not reached 70 %; (BE, BG, FR, HU, LT, PL, RO, SK).

The gender employment gap varies from 3.6 percent in Finland to 37.2 percent in Malta. The gap is smallest in the Nordic and Baltic countries and largest in southern European countries.

The relative growth in part-time employment among women has been substantial. The greater availability of part-time jobs has facilitated the participation of women in particular by allowing them to combine work and family responsibilities better, although it should also be recognised that part-time work may have lower wages, fewer fringe benefits and career possibilities than full-time jobs, and reflects to a certain degree the unavailability of full-time work, that is to say, part-time employment also creates underemploy-

ment. The rise in women's employment rate in the EU27 between 2000 and 2007 may come to a sudden halt as a result of the drastic economic changes commenced in 2008. Forecasts based on earlier trends need to be revised and gains made against employment rate targets might be at risk.

Indicator 9: Data for unemployment are taken from the Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and show the number of unemployed persons aged 15–64 as a percentage of the labour force in the same age category. The unemployment rate underestimates women's unemployment since it does not take account of the fact that people can also, for example, be part-time unemployed. Labour market data are employment and male biased; a person who works for one hour in a week is counted as employed even if that person is unemployed for 39 hours in the same week. More women than men are part-time employed and therefore also more often part-time unemployed.

In most MS the unemployment rates are higher for women than for men. Women's unemployment ranges from less than 4 % in the Netherlands to almost 13 % in Greece, while men's varies from less than 3 % in the Netherlands to almost 10 % in Slovakia. In six MS unemployment is higher for men than for women (DE, EE, IE, LV, RO, UK) and in one (LT) the level is the same; in the rest of the EU women's unemployment is higher than men's. In general, where there is a high level of unemployment for women there also tends to be a high level of unemployment for men (PL, SI, FR and DE).

Unemployment has been falling in most countries between 2000 and 2007 for both women and men. Gender gaps in unemployment rates have also been narrowing, by 0.8 percent in EU27. The main exceptions to this pattern are Lithuania, Slovakia and Hungary, where the gender gaps have widened by 2 percent or more. On the other hand, in Spain, Cyprus, Italy, Poland, France and Greece the gap has closed by more than 2 percent.

Indicator 10: The most reliable harmonised gender pay gap data are based on the Structure of Earnings Survey (SES).³² The gender pay gap in unadjusted form represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and those of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male employees. It is not possible to portray this indicator fully since at present no data are available by education and sector and the age categorisation is not asked for.

At EU27 level, the gender pay gap was slightly more than 17 % in 2007. For women there is a negative gender pay gap in all countries. The largest gap is

found in Estonia (30 %), the smallest in Italy (4 %). Some countries seem not to be doing very well on this indicator, since the gap is 20 % or more (FI, LT, EL, UK, DE, CY, NL, SK, CZ, AT, EE); others score better with gaps of less than 10 % (IT, MT, PL, PT, SI, BE).

However, a narrow gender pay gap may not mean a better labour market situation for women than a larger gender pay gap (OECD 2002). The reason for this is that highly educated and better paid women are to a great extent employed in almost all countries. This is not the case with women with lower education and less pay. The differences between countries are much greater in the latter category; in some countries the employment rate is relatively high, while in others it is quite low.

This means that a narrow gender pay gap may be connected to a modest total employment rate for women in some countries and a wider gender pay gap may be connected to a higher employment rate among women in other countries (see figure 4.6.15). The composition of the labour force is therefore important in explaining cross-country differences in the gender pay gap.

Contrary to popular belief, women's lower educational qualifications and intermittent labour market participation are not the main reasons for the gender pay gap. The gap is in fact a visible symptom of factors such as the existence and persistence of gender stereotypes, occupational segregation and the wage structure. Women and men tend to work in different occupations and economic sectors, women are penalised for that, and men benefit. The extent of the penalty differs also depending on the wage structure; a more inequitable wage structure is likely to widen the gender pay gap and a compressed wage structure to diminish it.

Today women have shorter periods of employment absence, and more women are found as managers and in high status occupations than before.

32. The unadjusted gender pay gap represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and those of female paid employees. From 2006 onwards, the GPG data is based on the methodology of the Structure of Earnings Survey (SES) carried out with a four-yearly periodicity. The most recent available reference years are 2002 and 2006 and Eurostat computed the GPG for these years on this basis. For the intermediate years (2007 onwards) countries provide Eurostat with estimates benchmarked on the SES results. Target population is all employees without restrictions as far as age and hours worked are concerned, but only enterprises with 10 employees or more are included. In accordance with NACE Rev. 1.1. economic activities are included for the aggregate sections C O, excluding L, which means that A. Agriculture, hunting and forestry; B Fishing; L Public administration and defence, compulsory social security; P Activities of households and Q Extraterritorial organisations and bodies are excluded.

However, at the same time wage differences in general are widening and there is a trend towards a more decentralised and individualised wage setting system. Over a longer period of time the pay gap has been narrowing in most countries, but there is no guarantee that this will be the case in future.

4.6.4. Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

According to the MS reports to the UNECE, the important gender inequalities remain evident, especially as far as equal pay is concerned, where there is still a pay gap between women and men in all the MS; in some countries it is widening. Horizontally and vertically gender segregated labour markets and also connected to the gender pay gap, which also is a fact in all EU countries.

As a major trend the employment rate of women has been increasing in the EU but remains lower than the employment rate of men. Several countries refer to the aim of increasing women's employment rate to 60 % by 2010. Hardly any report mentions men's declining employment rate. Women's prevalent part-time work, temporary employment and sexual harassment at work are mentioned by some MS.

The main political measures taken concerning the situation on the labour market are policies aimed at closing the gender pay gap by publicly awarding companies and/or workplaces as family friendly and/or gender equal. Almost all countries are trying to encourage female entrepreneurs in different ways and some favour employment for women in agriculture and in rural areas.

Reconciliation of work and family for both women and men is a prominent feature of reports from the MS. Examples cited are the improvement and increase of childcare, and occasionally also elderly care and the promotion of parental leave. Many reports emphasise the aim of encouraging fathers to take a more active part in their children's upbringing. However, other unpaid domestic work is not mentioned, except in the report by Slovenia, in which it is stated that "The key role men are required to play in this process of sharing a burden of unpaid work with women has been at the centre of our national concern".

The reports by the MS speak in terms of women and men, with an emphasis on women, although some mention the special problems different categories of women may have. Migrant, Roma, vulnerable groups of women, deaf and handicapped women are mentioned in those reports.

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4.7 WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING (G)

4.7.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

Two strategic objectives have been formulated for the area women in power and decision making, defined as:

- G.1 Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision making
- G.2 Increase women's capacity to participate in decision making and leadership.

4.7.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

The Council has adopted two sets of indicators pertaining to Women in power and decision-making within this monitoring process. In 1999 and 2003, the Council adopted conclusions on Women in power and decision making and defined and approved relevant indicators in those fields

During Finland's Presidency in 1999 the Council adopted a set of nine indicators in the area Women in power and decision-making. The nine indicators concerned primarily the participation of women in political decision-making. The indicators adopted were:

- Indicator 1. The proportion of women in the single/lower houses of the national/federal Parliaments of the Member States and in the European Parliament
- Indicator 2. The proportion of women in the regional Parliaments of the Member States, where appropriate
- Indicator 3. The proportion of women in the local assemblies of the Member States
- Indicator 4. Policies to promote a balanced participation in political elections
- Indicator 5. The proportion of women of the members of the national/federal Governments and the proportion of women members of the European Commission
- Indicator 6. The number of women and men senior/junior ministers in the different fields of action (portfolios/ministries) of the national/federal governments of the Member States
- Indicator 7. Proportion of the highest ranking women civil servants. Proportion of women civil servants in the two highest ranking positions (after the Minister) of the ministries (appointed, elected or nominated) (central government) and the respective levels in the European Institutions.

- Indicator 8. The distribution of the highest ranking women civil servants in different fields of action. The proportion of women civil servants at the two highest levels in the EU Member States in the different fields of action of the ministries and the proportion of high-level female civil servants at the two highest levels of the European Institutions in the different fields of action of Directorate generals. Categorised according to the BEIS-typology.
- Indicator 9. The proportion of women of the members of the Supreme Courts of the Member States and the proportion of women of the members of the European Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance.

Seven of these indicators are tabled in the European Commission Database Women and Men in decision-making (indicator 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). This database was launched in 2004, and it provides information on gender balance in the political, judicial and economic fields at European level. The Commission's database is updated quarterly as regards political data at European and national level and annually as regards all other topics. During the Slovenian Presidency in 2008, a review was carried out on the basis of these nine indicators. The figures used in this chapter were collected between May 2008 and October 2008.

During Italy's Presidency in 2003 the Council adopted a further set of nine indicators. These indicators concerned women and men in economic decision-making and they were drawn up on the basis of Greece's Presidency's preparatory work in this area. Indicators adopted were:

- Indicator 10. The proportion and number of women and men among Governors and deputy/vice governors of the Central Banks
- Indicator 11. The proportion and number of women and men among members of the decision-making bodies of the Central Banks
- Indicator 12. The proportion and number of women and men among ministers and deputy ministers/vice-ministers of the Economic Ministries
- Indicator 13. The proportion and number of women and men among presidents and vice-presidents of the Labour Confederations
- Indicator 14. The proportion and number of women and men among members of total governing bodies of the Labour Confederations
- Indicator 15. The proportion and number of women and men among presidents and vice-presidents of the Employer Confederations
- Indicator 16. The proportion and number of women and men among members of total governing bodies of the Employer Confederations

- Indicator 17. The proportion and number of women and men among chiefs of executive boards of the top 50 firms publicly quoted on the national stock exchange.
- Indicator 18. The proportion and number of women and men among members of executive boards of the top 50 firms publicly quoted on the national stock exchange.

Of these indicators, five can be consulted in the Commission database on Women and Men in Decision-making (indicator 10, 11, 12, 17, 18). In addition, indicators 13, 14, 15 and 16 on gender balance among social partners organisations are also covered in the Database but only at European level.

4.7.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

While the last few years have seen a general increase in the number of women in decision-making positions in Europe, women continue to be a minority in the political and economical spheres. In parliaments, governments and ministries, and in the private sector too, power still rests in the hands of men.

Indicator 1: Women's access to political decision-making bodies in national legislatures (single/lower house) in the MS has increased over the past decade, from around 16 % in 1997 to 24 % in 2008. Although the representation of women has increased, more than three out of four members of the national legislatures across EU are still men, and women continue to be sidelined from the structures of governance that determine political and legislative priorities. While the proportion of women in national parliament has increased, there are great differences between the MS, ranging from 9 % in Malta to 47 % in Sweden (table 4.7.1). Three countries have more than 40 % women members of the single/lower house of Parliament (SE, FI, NL), but the majority of the MS still have less than 25 % women MPs. The number of MS (8) with 30 % women or more in their national legislatures has not increased over the last five years.

The gender balance is somewhat better at European level than in national parliaments. Within the European Parliament, the representation of women has increased from 27.5 % in 1996 to 31.2 % in 2004 and 35 % in the last European elections in June 2009.

Indicator 2: In the Commission's database on women and men in decision-making, regional authorities are considered to be those that are one step below the national level but above the local level. Regional assemblies exist in 19 of

the MS. The proportion of women in regional assemblies has increased from 21.9 % in 1999 to 27.8 % in 2008. While four MS have more than 40 % women members of their regional assemblies (FR, SE, FI, ES), the majority of the MS still have less than 30 % women in those regional bodies. No country has less than 10 %. In general, countries with higher levels of female representation in national legislatures also have higher levels of female representation in regional and local assemblies. Some countries have higher average proportions of women in their regional and local assemblies (UK and FR). This difference can partly be explained by the different electoral systems employed at national and regional/local levels.

Indicator 3: In general, the level of female representation in local assemblies is, like the representation of women in regional assemblies, higher than the proportion of women in national parliaments. In 2008, local assemblies consisted of 26.6 % women on average among the EU MS. Three MS have more than 40 % women in local assemblies (ES, LV and SE). In France, the representation of women is higher in local and regional assemblies than in the national parliament. Greece, Austria and the Netherlands have lower levels of women in the local and regional assemblies, and these countries therefore deviate from the general trend.

While many local assemblies, especially in the new MS, have less than 20 % women, Latvia stands out with 42 % women in its local assembly. Compared to 1999 and 2003, the number of countries with more than 30 % women in local assemblies has increased from 2 in 1999 and 3 in 2003 to 8 in 2008.

Indicator 4: One way of improving the gender balance amongst candidates is to apply special measures in the form of general goals/targets, minimum recommendations or gender quotas that regulate the composition of the list of candidates put forward for elections. Gender quotas have been adopted by approximately 100 countries across the world, and they can be applied in many different forms (Dahlerup ed. 2006, www.quotaproject.org). A distinction is usually made between legislated quotas (quotas applied by means of the law) and voluntary party quotas (quotas adopted voluntarily by political parties).

Six of the MS (BE, EL, ES, FR, PT and SI) have introduced legislated quotas applicable to elections to the national parliament (lower/single house). As pointed out by a study published in 2008 by the European Parliament, *Electoral Gender Quota Systems and their Implementation in Europe*, gender quotas are an effective policy tool for increasing women's representation in political

bodies, if adequately constructed. Both legislated quotas and voluntary party quotas may lead to permanent increases in women's political representation at all levels. But quotas do not automatically result in equal representation of women and men in political decision making. The European Parliament study suggests that the introduction of quotas may fall short if quotas are not compatible with the electoral system in use and do not include rules governing rank order and imposing penalties for non-compliance.

Indicator 5: The gender balance amongst appointed members of national governments in the MS has increased over time, albeit slowly. In 1994/95, governments consisted of 21 % women, and in 2008, the proportion was 25 % women. Thus, men represent three quarters of the national governments, and this proportion is similar to the proportion of women and men in elected parliaments (76 % men, 24 % women). In general, countries with higher levels of female representation in national parliaments also have higher levels of female representation in national governments. However, there are great differences between the MS. In 2008, while Finland had a majority of female ministers (60 %), Spain had parity (50 %), three countries had 40 % women or more in their national governments (SE, BE, DE), and three MS had less than 10 % women (CY, SK and RO).

At the European Commission, the number of female commissioners has increased significantly. Since the first women Commissioner was appointed in 1988, the present Commission (June 2009) is comprised of 10 women (37 %) and 17 men (63 %), the best ever in terms of women's numerical representation.

Indicator 6: The number of women and men senior/junior ministers in different fields of action can be categorized according to the functions of the respective minister. In the Database on Women and Men in Decision-Making, the BEIS typology describes this aspect of political power and refers to four types of state functions: 1). Basic functions (foreign and internal affairs, defence, justice, etc.), 2). Economic functions (finance, trade, industry, agriculture, etc.), 3). Infrastructure (traffic, communication, environment, etc.), and 4). Socio-cultural functions (social affairs, health, children, family, youth, elderly people, education, science, culture, labour, sports, etc.).

When it comes to the number of women and men senior/junior ministers by field of action, differences between the sexes are to be found primarily in the field of socio-cultural and basic functions (table 4.7.2). A majority of the female ministers (40.5 %) represents the field of socio-cultural functions, and

a minority of them (17,5 %) represents the field of economic functions. A little bit more than a fourth of them (28 %) are represented in the basic functions. In contrast, a majority of the male ministers (41 %) are represented in basic functions and one fourth of them are represented in economic functions (26 %), while a minority of them are represented in the socio-cultural functions (20 %). Women and men are similarly represented in field of infrastructure (12 % of women, 13 % of men).

Regarding the number of women and men senior/junior ministers by field of action, it is important to draw attention to the fact that socio-cultural functions, a function represented by a large pool of women senior/junior ministers, often go along with a large budget. To be involved in this field, therefore, is not necessarily a bad priority.

Indicators 7 and 8: Indicators 7 and 8 concern the proportion of women civil servants in the two highest-ranking positions (after the minister) of ministries (appointed, elected or nominated) and their corresponding levels in the European Institutions. In 2008, women were represented in about a third (30.1 %) of the top two levels of the civil service in the MS compared to about a fourth in 2003. In nine EU countries, women are more or less equally represented in the top ranks of the civil service (BG, SI, ES, SK, LV, HU, SE, RO, PL). In Denmark, Ireland, Cyprus, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg men still dominate the senior positions in the top two tiers of the civil service. The EU Parliament consists of 41 % women civil servants at the top level, and the corresponding figure for the Council of the European Union is 15 %. With the exception of the Council of the European Union, progress has been made.

Indicator 9: 'The proportion of women among judges of the Supreme Courts of the Member States and in the European Court of Justice and Court of First Instance has increased over time. In 1999, these bodies consisted of about 27 % women, and in 2008 that proportion had increased to 32 %. In seven MS, the Supreme Courts consist of 40 % women or more (LU, BG, RO, SK, HU, LV, SE). In five MS, these bodies consist of less than 10 % female representatives (ES, CY, UK, PT, MT).

Indicators 10 and 11: The number of women among governors of the Central Banks of member States has remained minimal over the last five years. In 2003, one of the EU-15 countries had a female governor in the Central Bank (DK), and in 2008, no woman was appointed Central Bank Governor. However,

when the distribution of women and men among the members of the central bank boards is taken into consideration, the proportion has changed slightly. In 2003, women accounted for 13 % of the members of central banks boards. In 2008, the proportion of women among members had increased to 17 %. Three MS have central banks with 30 % or more women in the board (FR, DK, FI), and Sweden is the only one with more than 40 % women. In contrast, central bank boards in Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia are entirely male.

Indicator 12: Out of 108 senior economy ministers 18 are women and 90 are men. Thus, the proportion of female senior economy minister is only 17 %. About half of the MS do not have a female senior economy minister. Compared to 2003, however, the number of female economy ministers has increased, from 13 female ministers in 2003 to 18 in 2008. Among junior economy ministers, the proportion of women is slightly higher (19 % women).

Indicators 13–14: Italy's report of 2003 states that out of a total of 26 Labour confederations for 12 responding countries, there were only 4 female Presidents (15.4 %) and 10 female vice-presidents (23.3 %). A survey conducted by ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) in 2008 shows that women's trade union membership has increased over recent years. Despite the fact that women's trade union membership has increased, as noted in the ETUC survey of 2008, women are not progressing easily to top level positions. The same survey showed that only three national confederations (among the EU MS) reported having a woman as a president, FNV (Netherlands Trade Union Confederation), LO-Sweden and SACO (Sweden). This represents a decline since the 2007 congress figures, where the corresponding number stood at seven. From the organisations that responded to the survey, nine had a female vice president. A number of those positions were held jointly with men. The current President of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is a woman.

Overall, the presence of women is still very low both among trade union members and in top level positions, and little progress has been made in this area in recent years. In fact, as the ETUC survey concludes, some trade unions have made U-turns in this regard, replacing female leaders with male ones.

The EU database on decision-making in the European social partner organisations (European level) shows that women are the heads of the highest decision-making body in 5 organisations (6.9 %), while men are the heads of 67 organisations (93.1 %). Moreover, women constitute 15 % of the members of

the highest decision-making bodies. 17 women (24.3 %) and 53 men (75.7 %) are the heads of daily executive boards.

Indicators 15–16: Italy's report of 2003 notes that out of a total of 27 Employer confederations in 13 responding countries, there were no female Presidents and 9 female vice presidents (8.9 %). No figures for 2008 are available.

Indicators 17 and 18: The Commission's Database on Women and Men in Decision-making includes data on the presidents and members of the boards or highest decision-making bodies of the largest publicly quoted companies (based on current membership of blue-chip index) in the EU. Data collected in October 2008 shows that women are still excluded from the top of the business world. The proportion amongst presidents of executive boards of the top 50 firms publicly quoted on the national stock exchange is 3 % women and 97 % men. The proportion of women amongst this group has increased by only one percentage unit, from 2 % in 2003 to 3 % in 2008. Furthermore, company boards are still dominated by men, consisting of 89 % men and 11 % women. Despite the fact that the proportion of women among the members of the executive boards of these firms has increased from 6 % in 2003 to 11 % in 2008, men still have the power in the business world.

There are variations between the MS. In 15 MS none of the companies has a female president. Newer MS (BG, CZ, PL, SK) do better than the older ones when it comes to the representation of women on boards. In no MS have legal quotas been adopted for the representation of women in economic decision-making. Legal quotas have so far been adopted only in Norway.

4.7.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

A general trend reported by the MS is the fact that despite the increasing number of women actively involved in public and political life, women remain under-represented at the decision-making level. Although the political system per se in the MS does not discriminate against female representation, and although anti-discrimination legislation exists, female representation in the corridors of power has not changed much over recent years. Thus, male dominance persists, and balanced participation of women and men in decision-making continues to be on the agenda in all of the MS.

The Member States advance various reasons for this under-representation, including problems concerning the reconciliation of professional and family life, gender stereotypes, lack of political will, problems relating to political

culture, intra-party elites and inter-party elites, restrictions caused by the electoral system, etc. Latvia reports, for instance, that the fact that some women in very high and responsible positions represent positive examples simultaneously impedes fruitful discussions about women in power positions: “Their examples make it harder to discuss the barriers that still do exist for most women”.

Strategies to combat gender imbalances in positions of power

The Member States report on various ways and strategies to redress gender imbalances in various fields of power, including politics, public administration, the judiciary and the corporate sector. These strategies vary from information and awareness raising campaigns to legislative measures such as the enactment of legal quotas. When it comes to quotas, some MS have adopted electoral candidate quotas to target the number of women in elected positions. Other MS have adopted gender quotas for public bodies only, thus targeting the number of women in high administrative positions.

One fairly common strategy revolves around activities such as information campaigns, public awareness raising campaigns, various capacity building programmes and targeted training activities, and research. For instance, Austria reports on its mentoring programmes, covering both the federal administration and the private sector, and Malta and Cyprus give details of training activities in political decision-making for women considering a political career and of various media campaigns. In a similar vein, Estonia reports on the “More Women in Politics” project in 2006, which aimed at increasing the participation of women in politics through improved cooperation between civic associations and by raising the awareness of the public. Portugal reported on a campaign on women and decision-making. Similarly, Lithuania and Luxembourg report on seminars on gender-balanced participation in decision-making and various government campaigns. In Germany, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth launched a FRAUEN MACHT KOMMUNE (Women’s Power in Local Councils) campaign, which encouraged women who are already active community service volunteers to become involved in local politics.

Special measures in elected and government bodies

Another fairly common strategy intended to combat gender imbalances in decision-making is various kinds of special measures, including recommendations, targets and quotas. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the Govern-

ment has introduced the UK-wide Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act, enabling political parties to take special measures to boost the number of women standing in local, national and European Elections. The use of women only shortlists has been one of the most effective mechanisms in increasing the representation of women in parliament, with women currently making up 20 % of MPs compared to just 9 % before 1997. The government is also putting in place measures to increase the diversity of women – including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women in power and decision-making at all levels, and is implementing programmes for better understanding of and addressing multiple barriers to their careers. In 2008, the Government launched a cross-party taskforce to take practical action to increase the number of BAME women local councillors. In 2009, the Government announced its intention to extend the positive action on all women shortlists to 2030 in recognition of the need to accelerate progress.

Ireland reports on the importance of strategic objectives and targets in government, both centrally and at individual Department level. According to an Irish Government decision in 2005 all agencies nominating persons to State Boards and committees must provide both male and female nominations for the relevant Ministry.

Finland, well known for its high number of women in parliament and government, reports that the Finnish government applies a gender quota provision of 40 % to appointments to State committees, advisory boards and other corresponding bodies as well as municipal bodies with the exception of municipal councils.

Electoral Gender quotas

While the Finnish case is an example of quotas at the administrative level, some MS have adopted gender quotas targeted at elected bodies. These electoral gender quotas come mainly in two forms: legal quotas laid down in the constitution and/or electoral law or voluntary party quotas. Six countries report having adopted legal quotas (BE, EL, ES, FR, PT, SI).

The Belgian quota law adopted in 2002 provides that female candidates shall occupy half of the positions on the list, including at least one out of the two top positions. Party lists which do not abide by this law are declared invalid. Belgium reports that the introduction of this law has resulted in an increase in the proportion of women in national parliament from 20 % to 35 %. In France, the 2000 election law provides that the parity reform (50–50 %) shall apply to all elections by proportional ballot, and be applied to the overall

balance among male and female candidates for each party in national elections, which are determined by a two-round majority vote. France reports that the adoption of legal measures has resulted in an increase from 27.5 % women in regional/local assemblies in 1998 to 47.6 % in 2004. A similar result may be noted in French elections to the European Parliament, in which the proportion of women elected increased to 43.6 % in 2004. The proportion of women in the national parliament, however, is only 19 %.

Legal quotas to combat women's under-representation in elected bodies have also been introduced in Spain. According to the Spanish Equality Law of 2007, party electoral lists are required to have a minimum of 40 % and a maximum of 60 % of either sex among their candidates in all elections. Although parity has not been fully implemented in elected bodies, Spain reports on an increased level of female representation: from 28 % to 36 % in the Congress, and from 24 % to 28 % in the Senate. In Portugal, moreover, the Organic Law 3/2006 stipulates a minimum representation (33 %) of women and men in the lists of candidates for election. Additionally, for local, Portuguese and European Parliament elections the candidate lists must not have more than two persons of the same sex in succession. The law will be fully applied for the first time to the local, national and European elections to be held in 2009.

Slovenia too has enacted electoral gender quotas, first for local elections in 2005 and then for the national assembly elections in 2006. According to the Local Elections Law of 2005, candidate lists for the municipal elections must ensure that either sex accounts for at least 40 % of all candidates, and that the candidates in the first half of the list alternate by sex. According to the National Assembly Elections Act of 2006, either sex must be represented by at least 35 % of the total number of candidates on the list, provided that the list contains at least four candidates. The introduction of quotas fell short with the 2008 elections, in which only 13 % women were elected to the national parliament.

Greece, finally, reports that under the law of 2008 a quota in favour of female candidates at the national elections was established. This means that at least one third of all candidates on the electoral lists of the political parties, coalitions of parties or independent candidates throughout the country must be women otherwise the specific lists will not be valid and will be banned from the national elections. In some MS attempts to introduce legal electoral gender quotas have been resisted (SK, HU).

Corporate sector

Some MS report that while the representation of women in politics is quite satisfactory, in all other areas, public and private, participation is very low. In the Netherlands, for example, over 50 organisations, in the public as well as the private sector, have voluntarily signed up to a charter called Talent to the Top. By joining the charter, organisations commit themselves to developing or continuing to pursue a strategy for the appointment and through-flow of women in management positions.

Sweden reports having gender balanced elected assemblies, ranging from national to local, as well as gender balanced boards in state owned companies, but lower female representation on the boards of private companies. In order to achieve gender balance on the boards of companies, a national board chair programme for women has been initiated by the Government. This program is intended to spread good examples through networking activities, mentoring and training.

In Finland, state-owned companies or state associate companies are required to increase the number of women to 40 %, a goal which has been reached. When it comes to private companies, a new corporate government code published in 2008 states that there should be women and men on all company boards. However, the development of the proportion of women' on the boards of private companies has been modest. Other MS report on higher female representation in management positions than in elected bodies (LT). Some MS provide little information on the issue of women and men in decision-making and report on few activities (BG, RO, CZ).

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4.8 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (H)

(see Chapter III)

4.9 HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN (I)

4.9.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action)

Human rights of women were declared critical area I of the Beijing Platform for Action. Three strategic objectives were agreed upon within this area:

- I 1. Promote and protect the human rights of women through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- I 2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice
- I 3. Achieve legal literacy

4.9.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

At the current stage, the European Union has not developed indicators in this field. However, all EU Member States have ratified the CEDAW and they are legally bound to put its provisions into practice taking into account their national reservations. They are also committed to submitting regular national reports on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations. Because of the existence of the CEDAW and the regular reporting system the issue of developing special indicators in the field of human rights for women is less relevant. In addition, a gender perspective is to be applied when human rights are discussed.

4.9.3 The CEDAW

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, and it entered into force as an international treaty in 1981. Among international human rights treaties the CEDAW assumes an important position, bringing women into the focus of human rights concern. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. In so doing, the Convention establishes not only an international bill of rights for women, but also an agenda for action by countries to guarantee the enjoyment of those rights. In its preamble, the Convention explicitly acknowledges that “extensive discrimination against women continues to exist,” and emphasises that such discrimination “violates

the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity.” In article 1, discrimination is defined as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.” The States party are bound to take “all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men” (Article 3).

The Convention provides the basis for the achievement of gender equality by ensuring women’s equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life – including the right to vote and to stand for election – as well as education, health and employment. The States parties agree to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Convention is the only human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations. It affirms women’s rights to acquire, change or retain their nationality and the nationality of their children. States party also agree to take appropriate measures against all forms of traffic in women and the exploitation of women.

Human rights, equal treatment of women and men and principles of non-discrimination based on sex have been identified as fundamental rights and values of the EU. As signatories to the CEDAW, EU Member States are legally bound to put its provisions into practice, taking into account their national reservations and to report regularly to the CEDAW Committee. The Committee also welcomes country-specific information from non-governmental organisations, in the form of alternative or shadow reports.

While the equal treatment of women and men and principles of non-discrimination based on sex have been identified as fundamental rights and values of the EU, it has recently been recommended that legislators and policy makers address the various grounds of discrimination and axes of inequality and the interaction between them. In Article 13 TEC six components requiring measures to combat discrimination are identified: sex, racial and ethnic origin, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation³³. In the European

33. Article 13 TEC: “Without prejudice to the other provisions of this Treaty and within the limits of the powers conferred by it upon the Community, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation” (New article introduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997).

Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), furthermore, it is stated that the enjoyment of rights and freedoms should be secured without discrimination in relation to several categories³⁴.

In response many MS have enacted a single and integrated instrument of equality legislation and merged separate enforcement bodies into one body, in order better to tackle the multiple discriminations and inequalities to which individuals might be exposed.

4.9.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

Human rights cover a very wide range of issues, including principles of non-discrimination based on sex, the combating of sexual harassment, violence against women and trafficking in women, and the rights of the child, some of which are addressed within other critical areas of concern.

Member States report on increased public awareness raising campaigns on the issue of the human rights of women. In Austria, for instance, human rights education has been integrated into the core curriculum in schools, and in Latvia free consultations on legal matters within the framework of specific projects have been provided. In some MS, national reports to CEDAW have been translated into the native language and disseminated to the public (DE, HU, PT). In other MS, a National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights has been established (CY, LT, LU, SK). Some of these have the mandate to handle complaints from victims of discrimination, to monitor respect for human rights and to serve as an advisory body to the Government in these issues. In some MS, National Action Plans for Human Rights have been established (ES, SE).

Several MS report on the need to tackle the problems relating to multiple inequalities. Malta, for instance, has initiated the MOSAIC – One in Diversity project with the aim of highlighting the six grounds of discrimination. In the United Kingdom, moreover, new equality legislation – the Equality Bill – will be introduced in mid 2009. This new bill will strengthen existing anti-discrimination legislation, and it will also introduce a new public sector – Equality Duty – which will integrate and build on the success of the three existing duties on race, gender and disability and which will extend to cover the remaining equality strands: age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

34. ECHR, Article 14. Prohibition of discrimination: "The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other Status."

and gender reassignment. Similarly, in many MS, (for instance BE and LT), new anti-discrimination laws have been enacted in order better to combat discrimination based on several discrimination grounds. In other countries, such as Latvia, the absence of a single and integrated act is being addressed.

In Estonia, the Gender Equality Commissioner has received an extended mandate, having to take into consideration discrimination or equal treatment based on nationality, race, colour, religion or belief, age disability or sexual orientation. In Romania, the National Agency for Roma People has been developing programs regarding the enforcement and social protection of Roma women and girls. Similar activities are noted in the report by Hungary. Also in Romania the National Agency for Equal Opportunity between women and men (ANES) has been involved in specific activities during the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007), organising, for instance, a seminar on multiple discrimination in the labour market, a Diversity Week, etc. Similar activities have been organised in the Czech Republic, for instance, the Minister for Human Rights and Minorities took part in 2007 in a public discussion on equal opportunities for women and men with special focus on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The goal was to raise public awareness with respect to the anti-discrimination legislation put forward by the EU and to promote balanced reflection on all reasons for discrimination. In Portugal the government has created a national body for the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All integrating the public administration and NGO's. A National Action Plan was developed and initiatives such as 23 municipal assemblies, a travelling exhibition, regional awards and seminars were implemented.

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4.10 WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

4.10.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

The critical area J was reserved for women and the media at the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. Two strategic objectives were linked with the area:

- J.1 Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication
- J.2 Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

4.10.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

At the current stage, no specific indicators have been defined by the European Union in this domain.

4.10.3 EU policy on eliminating gender stereotypes

The field has recently been addressed by the EU. In the Commission's Report on equality between women and men – 2008 the need for MS to step up efforts to tackle stereotypes in education, employment and the media is identified. On 15 May 2007, Germany, Portugal and Slovenia signed a Trio Presidency Declaration on the promotion of gender equality in the European Union, identifying the elimination of gender stereotypes as the connecting theme of the gender equality work undertaken by the Trio Presidency. Also, the challenges faced by women and men in response to changing the gender role models was one of the key issues addressed at the Informal Meeting of Ministers of Gender Equality and Family Affairs under Germany's Presidency in May 2007. A European expert conference on "Entrepreneurship and Employability – Gender Stereotypes" was organised by Portugal's Presidency in 2007, and a Europe-wide conference entitled "Elimination of Gender Stereotypes – Mission (Im)Possible?" was organised by Slovenia's Presidency in January 2008. The Czech Republic's Presidency pursued the debate on this issue and also organised a European expert conference on "New ways in overcoming gender stereotypes".

In May 2008, the Council adopted conclusions on "Eliminating Gender Stereotypes in Society" in which it concluded that the media, including the advertising industry, contributed to the reproduction of culturally transmitted stereotypes and images of women and men. Therefore, the Council concluded,

it was necessary to develop critical media education in schools, and, while taking into account the freedom of expression of the media, to establish a dialogue with the media on the harmful effects of negative gender stereotypes on the self-perception of young people and on their perceptions of gender roles and relations in society. The media was also described as having an important role to play in combating gender stereotypes and in promoting a non-discriminatory and realistic portrayal of girls/women and boys/men in society.

4.10.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

Many Member States report that women are portrayed in an unbalanced and stereotypical way in the media. They also report on the under-representation of women in the media at large and the problems concerning the sexualisation of society. Several activities intended to combat these problems are reported on. For instance, in some countries codes of conduct have been set up as a self regulatory system (NL, LU). Belgium reports on the Flemish Authority's having set up a media database of expert women for journalists and media makers. Whenever they need an expert to comment upon an issue, this database could be consulted. Member States also report on Commissions for Equality that have given awards and prizes for journalists and filmmakers who have promoted gender equality in their work (EL, PT).

Other Member States report on Offices of Equal Opportunities Ombudsmen and Equal Opportunities Development Centres that have participated in radio and TV broadcasts promoting gender equality. In some MS, sport and the media have been targeted. In Lithuania, for instance, The Equal Opportunities Development Centre participated in the international project Women and Men in Sport and Media with the aim of exploring similarities and differences in the representation of women and men in sports, promoting change in the gendered stereotypes in sports, educating persons influential in the field of forming women's and men's image in sport, and developing training material for sport reporters, trainers and coaches on the representation of women and men in sports, etc.

Many Member States report on seminars, round tables and research on the topic of media and gender. In Estonia and Latvia, for instance, research projects were initiated on the portrayal of women in the media, including female politicians. One of the main objectives of the projects was to raise awareness on the part of media practitioners, policy makers and general society regarding existing gender stereotypes that prevent full and equal representation of and participation by both sexes in decision-making. The Estonian

Journalists Union's Female Editors Association was formed to promote co-operation between female journalists.

In Spain, a specific institute (Observatorio de la Imagen de las Mujeres) conducts yearly studies on advertisement and comes up with recommendations to publishers who disseminate discriminatory material on how to modify or change their campaigns in a more gender sensitive way. In addition, several instruments have been enacted against the discriminatory portrayal of women in media, and a commission – La Comisión Asesora de la Imagen de las Mujeres en los Medios de Comunicación y la Publicidad [The Portrayal of Women in Mass Media and Advertisement] – has been set up. A Strategic plan for Gender Equality also lists five objectives in order to achieve gender equality within the field of media: the portrayal of women as active subjects, the proliferation of non-sexist pictures in mass media and advertisement, the promotion of role models, and assisting public and private media to live up to the goals listed in the gender equality law.

In France, similarly, a Commission has been established to reflect on the portrayal of women in the media. Not only are women under-represented in the media, the French report notes, they are also frequently presented in a gender stereotyped way. Legal enactments on the prohibition of advertisements with pornographic content or for services provided for the satisfaction of sexual desire, including prostitution, have been adopted in some MS (EE, LT). The training of journalists and communications experts is highlighted in many reports, including those from Hungary and Bulgaria. In the Finnish report, a training toolkit referred to as “Screening Gender” is a co-production between five public service broadcasting organisations in the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Germany. This kit contains tools designed to provide insight into gender and gender portrayal on television. The materials can be used in a wide range of training contexts, for example in courses on various aspects of programme making (interviewing techniques, script and scenario writing, commentary, visual grammar, and so on), in seminars to raise awareness among decision-making groups and in discussions with trainers themselves in the hope of focusing on training themes and priorities.

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4.11 WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT (K)

4.11.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

Following the Beijing platform for Action Women and the Environment was defined as critical area K and associated with three strategic objectives:

- K.1 Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels
- K.2 Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development
- K.3 Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

4.11.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

No indicators on women and the environment have been developed in the EU.

4.11.3 Trends in the discussion on gender and environment

The strategic objectives in the Beijing platform stress the importance of increasing the participation of women in the sectors related to environmental issues. The environmental field is broad and this means that gender balance has to be achieved in a range of sectors. Europe wide data on policy-making, sector specific professions, and education show gender gaps. For example, as the section in this report on women and decision-making shows, political decision-making is far from gender balanced. Furthermore, the EU is a segregated workplace as shown in the section on women and the economy. Women mainly have jobs in health, caring and service professions while industrial jobs are often dominated by men. Sectors such as energy, transport, and technological development are highly important for environmental issues but tend to be dominated by men in the workforce. Furthermore, managerial and policy making positions in these sectors are entrusted mainly to men.

Women remain absent from leadership, political and entrepreneurial decision making, from ownership in various companies, from the workforce of this sector and from the technical schools and scientific educational institutions where the future labour force is trained.

The Climate Issue is one of the most salient environmental issues in the contemporary global debate. Gender aspects have been absent from the convention and the negotiations in the past (until Bali Cop13). Only a few women have been able to engage in or contribute to future climate policies. The proportion of female ministers who attend climate negotiations has been fluctuating

between 15 and 20 % (Nordic Council 2009:12).

At the March 2008 session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) a panel debate was hosted on gender and climate. This event was followed by a Nordic conference on gender equality and climate change, hosted by the Nordic Council of Ministers in February 2009. At the conference 15 recommendations were drafted in preparation for the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in Copenhagen in December 2009. The basic assumptions on climate change and gender are that women and men affect the environment differently and are affected differently by climate change, and that there is a considerable gender gap in decision-making relating to climate change (Nordic Council of Ministers 2009). This report also states that no data or studies have examined the connections between women's and men's behavioural patterns and climate change.

However, studies have been conducted in climate-related sectors and these studies show that consumption and lifestyle patterns differ between women and men in rich countries as well. The difference is related to the gender division of labour and women's different access to resources, material wealth and power. Women have on average smaller incomes, less leisure time and generally consume less in comparison to men in the same geographical and social location. The gender division of labour means, for example, that women tend to work closer to the home and thus travel less often and shorter distances. A larger proportion of the male population than of the female use private cars and air travel far more frequently. Women tend to walk and use public transport. Mobility patterns seem to be shaped by different tasks in the division of labour (Vinz 2009:166).

Transport data has been available from Eurostat since 2000 and is reported annually in the TERM reports by the European Environment Agency. This data does not have a gender variable and there is no gender differentiated information on, for example, car ownership or the choice of transport mode. Assessing gender aspects on EU transport, the TRANSGEN project writes in its final report that "Transport is a traditionally male-dominated sector, both from the employment point of view and for the values that are there embedded" and they argue that that is the case, while it is also widely recognised that gender sensitive issues are very relevant to this sector as well.

4.11.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

Not all MS discuss action taken regarding the strategic objective, women and environment. There is no consistency in the way that environment is defined

or in how it is related to women and gender in reports to the UNECE. There is a lack of systematic reporting and very little reporting on what actions have actually been carried out. The reports that discuss this strategic objective give the reader an idea of how individual MS perceive environmental problems. For example, they relate to health, waste handling, rural development, etc., depending on the specific environmental conditions and problems of individual MS.

The major environmental concern for Bulgaria seems to be water resources and the treatment of waste. The report states that women should be empowered to safeguard the environment but nothing is said about what action has been taken. Lithuania writes that one of the objectives of the National Program for Equal opportunities is to integrate gender equality perspectives in environmental protection and arrange training in gender equality for officials in the Ministry of the Environment. Lithuania also recognizes the need for more information in society on environmental issues and considers women's NGOs an important part of that. In Cyprus the issue of women and environment is mainly entrusted to women's organizations and NGOs. Hungary states that environmental consciousness is not at the top of the agenda but that health improvement and food safety are considered important.

Some MS report on actions that have been taken in very diverse fields. Spain reports on efforts to include women and gender perspectives in rural development matters. The UK connects development and environment and work done in international development work to address the inequalities in climate change in particular. Belgium presents some statistics on the gender balance in the Department of Environment and refers to a bio monitoring project (started 1999) that screens certain environmental substances from the perspective of gender. Women are more sensitive to certain type of pollution. Sweden reports a similar strategy. The Chemicals Inspectorate is considering gender differences in the human health risks of chemicals. Sweden also reports that gender issues are part of the strategy for sustainable development and a new project has been started with the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning with the aim of developing strategic methods in order to mainstream gender in the urban planning process.

Portugal reports that a first "*Study for a diagnosis and the creation of gender indicators in the area of Environment and territory*" has been carried out and a "*Guide for gender mainstreaming in Environment and territory – Accessibility and transportation*" has been drawn up. They were undertaken in 2008 and launched in 2009. They will for the first time raise awareness on the part of public and private entities of the gender impact of this issue and of the need

for gender sensitive intervention in this area.

Finland reports that women have been actively involved in developing participative and interactive working methods as part of land use act since 2000. As part of the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2008-2011 each Finish ministry has to establish a working group on gender equality and do a gender impact assessment of key processes of the ministry. For example, the Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry looks at gender aspects in the National Forest Program, and the Ministry of Transport and Communications evaluates the gender aspects of the reform of public transport legislation, etc.

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4.12 THE GIRL CHILD (L)

4.12.1 The strategic objectives from the Platform for Action

Following the Beijing Platform for Action, violence against women was defined as critical area L and associated with nine strategic objectives:

- L.1 Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child
- L.2 Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls
- L.3 Promote and protect the rights of the girl child and increase awareness of her needs and potential
- L.4 Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training
- L.5 Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition
- L.6 Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work
- L.7 Eradicate violence against the girl child
- L.8 Promote the girl child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life
- L.9 Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl child.

4.12.2 Availability and relevance of EU-wide indicators

Slovenia's Presidency prepared a report and the Council decided in June 2008 on three indicators to be used when following the progress in this area:

- Indicator 1. Sex and relationship education: parameters of sexuality-related education in schooling (primary and secondary)
- Indicator 2. Body self-image: dissatisfaction of girls and boys with their bodies
- Indicator 3. Educational accomplishments: comparison of 15-year-old students' performance in mathematics and science and the proportion of girl students in tertiary education in the field of science, mathematics and computing and in the field of teacher training and education science.

When developing the indicators, the areas of reproductive and sexual health, education, and cultural attitudes and practices were prioritised over areas such as trafficking, violence and sexual exploitation, and girls in armed conflicts. The indicators consist of both quantitative and qualitative information and the main idea behind this is to combine various statistics so as to provide a qualitative analysis and interpretation of the status of the girl child.

In the Beijing PfA negative attitudes and practices targeting the girl child, such as discrimination, violence and exploitation, are key areas. These issues are less emphasised by the EU wide indicators. The first indicator is based upon, amongst other things, the presumption that informed, self-aware and empowered girls are more likely to confront sexual abusers and more capable of recognising the dangers of sexual exploitation and crimes.

Furthermore, it is argued that poor girls from poor families are less informed and have inferior access to health services and programmes, and also more often become very young mothers: “this perspective on the feminisation of poverty is another important argument in favour of highlighting the preventive function of sexual and reproductive health”, the Slovenian report states. Similarly, the second indicator on body and self image is meant to tackle the problem of bad self-image among girls (and boys). It is based upon the presumption that girls internalise socio-cultural attitudes and treat them as imperatives they have themselves imposed on their own bodies and sexuality. The indicator on educational accomplishments focuses on the choices of profession of girls and young women, to reveal the under-representation of girls in certain educational fields.

4.12.3 Trends emerging from EU-wide data

Indicator 1 is based on the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) study on sexuality education in Europe³⁵ as well as data from the Health Behaviour in School aged Children (HBSC)³⁶ source. As is noted in the Slovenian Presidency’s report, sexuality education at schools is mandatory in most EU Member States. Of the 24 countries participating in the IPPF and WHO study on sexuality education, 17 have made sexuality education mandatory. The first was Sweden (1955) and the latest Ireland (2003). In Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom sexuality education is not mandatory.

The most recent information available on sexuality education contents, teaching methods, etc., can be found in the Slovenian Presidency’s report of 2008. According to that report, sexuality education within the Members States varies considerably in many parameters. For example, in some countries children are introduced to the subject as early as five or six, while in other countries that does not happen before the age of 14. In some countries the topic is presented within traditional school subjects, while it in some countries

35. <http://www.epha.org/>

36. <http://www.hbsc.org/>

it constitutes a school subject in itself. In some countries sexuality education is standardized by ministries of education and/or health, in some teachers themselves are responsible for choosing perspectives, selecting topics and methods, and time-scheduling. Sexuality education also differs thematically. It either includes exclusively biological and/or physiological facts, on the one hand, and religious beliefs, on the other; or it is complex and includes issues such as gender equality, self-image and sexual orientation.

Indicator 2 is based on the Health Behaviour in School aged Children (HBSC)³⁷ databases. The databases contain information about girls' and boys' satisfaction with their bodies at the ages of 11, 13 and 15. The data from the HBSC study carried out in 2005/2006 shows that in all countries except Hungary girls' dissatisfaction with their bodies increases over time. In 20 countries 40 % or more of 15 year old girls think that they are "too fat". This tendency is stronger in countries in the northern and western parts of Europe. Amongst boys, generally fewer are dissatisfied with their bodies and the highest degree of dissatisfaction can be found amongst 13 year olds. In all countries and all age groups girls state that they are "too fat" more often than boys do. The differences increase with age and the greatest difference between 15 year old girls and boys is 35 percent units (figure 4.12.1; figure 4.12.2; figure 4.12.3). In all age groups the difference is the greatest in Poland.

In relation to change over time it can be noted that the differences in the HBSC data from the 2001/2002 study and the 2005/2006 study indicate that in 14 MS 15 year old girls' dissatisfaction with their bodies decreased, in 9 MS it increased and in 2 it stayed more or less the same (table 4.12.1).³⁸ For boys the suggested pattern seems to be somewhat different in this period. However, this data should be interpreted with caution since some changes are minor and it is difficult to assess trends with only two points of measurement. More data is needed to draw conclusions about statistically significant changes and about what such possible differences in body dissatisfaction actually mean for girls' self-image, health and well-being. Furthermore, how possible changes may be linked to changes in health amongst girls and boys (e.g. overweight according to BMI) or in cultural images of girls and boys (e.g. in the media) remains to be investigated.

37. <http://www.hbsc.org/>

38. Comparisons are made in cases where data exists for both times of measurement, i.e. for 25 out of 30 countries. Data exists only for England, Scotland and Wales separately, and for Belgium (French) and Belgium (Flemish) separately.

Indicator 3 is structured with references to two databases. The performance of girls in mathematical and scientific literacy is shown by the 2006 OECD PISA study³⁹. The proportion of girls in tertiary education (ISCED 5–6) can be found from Eurostat, valid for 2006. The PISA study of 2006 shows that in mathematics, girls' results are lower in all countries except Bulgaria. In Estonia and Lithuania the differences are small, one and two points respectively, while the differences in Austria and Germany are 23 and 20 points respectively (table 4.12.2). Within science, the differences in results between girls and boys are less pronounced. In 8 countries girls perform better while boys achieve a better result in 16 countries. In one country, (IE), no differences between girls and boys can be found. In Bulgaria and Greece the girls' results are more than 10 points higher than the boys', while they are 10 points lower in the United Kingdom. In Belgium, Ireland and Sweden the differences in performance are marginal. When it comes to change over time the results from the PISA 2006 study can be compared only with the PISA 2003 study. Because only two data points are included any conclusions should be drawn with caution. Overall, in this period the performance in mathematics remained unchanged and the performance advantage of young men remained unchanged between PISA 2003 and 2006 (OECD 2006).

As regards the proportion of girl students in tertiary education in the field of science, mathematics and computing and in the field of teacher training and education science, the proportion of women in science, mathematics and computing is less than 50 % in all countries except Romania, Italy and Portugal. However, it is higher than 30 % in all countries except the Netherlands where 16 % of the students are women. In all countries the proportion of women in teacher training and education science is very high, the lowest in Bulgaria and Germany with 68 % and 69 % respectively and highest in Estonia with 90 %. The most pronounced difference between young women and men can be found within teacher training and education science. The proportion of women studying science, mathematics and computing is more than 30 % in all countries except the Netherlands. The proportion of men studying teacher training and education science is less than 30% in all countries except Bulgaria and Germany. A comparison with the figures from 2001 indicates that the proportion of girl students in science, mathematics and computing has tended to decrease rather than increase, and that the proportion of girl students in education science and teacher training has tended to increase rather than

39. <http://www.pisa.oecd.org/>

decrease (Table 4.12.3). Again, this data should be interpreted with caution since some changes are minor and it is difficult to assess trends with only two points of measurement.

4.12.4 Trends emphasised in Member States' reporting to the UNECE

In the work preparing the EU wide indicators on the girl child it is stressed that the status of the girl child is interrelated with the status of children in general, as well as with the status of women in general. Consequently, it is important to distinguish between the status and opportunities of girl children and that of women and children in general, because girls can be subject to social repression on two fronts: as children and as females.

So far, this perspective on the girl child seems to have had only a limited impact upon the EU approach. The Slovenian Presidency's review (in 2008) of text on the girl child in the EU shows few documents that are exclusively devoted to the problem and the situation of the girl child in the EU. Furthermore, most documents adopted at EU level concern the status and the situation of children in general. It is thus argued that more focus should be placed in the future on the status of the girl child, and documents that deal with the girl child as a separate issue should be prepared.

The Member States' reporting to the UNECE also gives some cause for concern. Out of the 25 reports to the UNECE provided in time for the Beijing +15 report, eight omitted a separate section of the girl child and 2 provide only minimal information (e.g. references to other documents sent to the UN). Furthermore, out of the 15 reports that contain a separate section on the girl child, four describe measures aimed at children in general (sometimes also emphasising the principle of non-discrimination), and a further four reports describe gender neutral measures supplemented by some measure targeting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Thus only seven reports to the UNECE contain sections that describe in any detail measures – in addition to efforts to combat FGM – explicitly aimed at girl children. One observation is that girl specific information tends to occur when the Member States' reports focus on ethnic minority children, while measures targeting children in general are often discussed in gender neutral terms.

Two issues clearly placed on the Members States' political agendas and the issues most frequently discussed by the Member States' reports is FGM and violence against children. In the case of FGM, eight reports include measures such as national plans for action (AT in 2008, PT in 2009) and legal reforms (UK in 2003, LU in 2008), sometimes as part of their description of measures

targeting violence against women (ES). When it comes to violence, several other forms of violence – in addition to FGM – are addressed. One is forced marriage and in the period 2004–2009 at least five MS introduced laws against this form of violence, and in at least one other MS such a reform is being discussed at the moment. The reporting to the UNECE also contains a few examples where violence in the name of honour is discussed.

The most frequently recurring form of violence against children in the reporting is sexual violence, either as prostitution and/or trafficking or in relation to the internet (e.g. net security or grooming). The internet is a forum where children in general as well as girls specifically can get a voice on their own terms. But the sexual exploitation of children through the internet is clearly a major concern within the MS. As indicated by the section above, most countries that report progress in this area do not explicitly discuss these measures as intended to improve the situation of girl children in particular. One exception to this pattern is the report from Spain, which, amongst other things, quotes statistics indicating that almost nine out of ten victims of trafficking are girls.

In relation to the indicators adopted by the EU, some examples can be found where the MS report include information concerning sexual education (LT), body image (DK, LU) or education. One example of the latter is Austria's report on a special "girls' day" when the federal civil service offers girls a chance to acquaint themselves with new training options in future-oriented, non-traditional occupations and professions. In Germany, since 2001 on every fourth Thursday of April, technical enterprises, enterprises with technical departments and technical training facilities, universities, and research centres have been invited to organise open days for girls. The overall trend is, however, that the MS tend not to provide information related to the EU wide indicators. The quantitative information gathered through various databases and studies is thus not supplemented by further information through the reporting to the UNECE.

Some MS report measures specifically targeting ethnic minority girls; for example, the Bulgarian National Child Strategy considers the fact that in some regions and ethnic groups, from an early age girls are involved in domestic work and care for smaller brothers and sisters, at the expense of the time they should spend on education. Early marriage is another issue that is discussed. A further example of the recognition of diversity comes from Belgium where the Flemish Authority has funded policy research on the lower general well-being of lesbian and bisexual girls. Following from this an awareness raising

campaign has been launched to increase tolerance towards lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. In Portugal the first major study on discrimination based on sexual orientation and identity has been launched, aiming to find – through a greater perception of the phenomenon – future solutions to combat this discrimination.

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V Findings concerning the twelve critical areas of concern

5.1 WOMEN AND POVERTY (A)

Both income inequality and poverty have risen over the past 20 years. A substantial shift in poverty has taken place; children and young adults are today more likely to be poor than the population as a whole. Women are more vulnerable to income poverty than men. This is especially the case for single mothers (a category which has grown substantially), older women, immigrant and ethnic minority women, long-term unemployed and inactive women.

The gendered division of work in families directly affects women's access to and participation in the labour market. The unequal sharing of work in families, together with persistent gender inequalities and discrimination in the labour market, have severe effects on women's poverty, including entitlements to social protection.

Employment is a key factor for social inclusion and offers the most important means of escaping poverty. Being employed and earning wages are crucial for the economic independence of women and men, but also having equal access to the social security system and to owning and/or controlling assets such as land and housing. Against the background of rising income inequality and poverty, especially in some categories, and the economic and financial crisis extra efforts are needed to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

The MS and the European Commission have made a commitment to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010, considering that building a more inclusive European Union is an essential element in achieving the Union's ten-year strategic goal of sustained economic growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, in the context of the Lisbon Strategy (2000). The European Council invited the MS in March 2002 to set targets for significant reductions in the numbers of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

When the Council of the European Union decided on the indicators in May 2007 it encouraged the MS and the Commission to undertake research on poverty amongst women and men in all relevant contexts, including,

where appropriate, migrant and ethnic background and urban/rural location, with a view to drafting policies aimed at promoting social and professional inclusion.

It also urged the Member States and the Commission to develop statistical capacity within the EU further, in the context of the Open Method of Coordination process on social protection and social inclusion focused on the individuals in households, in order to address the gendered nature of poverty and monitor the impact of policies upon women and men alike.

In addition, it invited the MS to promote in-depth analysis of existing data from a gender perspective, as well as research, indicators and methodology on the issue of gender and poverty, thus ensuring that policies aimed at addressing poverty and social inclusion take gender equality into account.

5.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN (B)

Education has long been perceived as an essential vehicle of equality between women and men and the educational level of women has increased substantially in recent decades. Today girls and young women choose higher education, graduate faster than men, remain in school to completion and often outperform boys overall. Today girls and women have overall higher educational attainment than men and have a more diversified range of choices in scientific areas than men. Women dominate on the level of ISCED 5a in five broad fields of study and men in two. Among PhD graduates women are in the majority in five MS and very close to fifty percent in many countries, but at EU27 level men are in majority and in all EU countries there is a pattern in which men (68 %) outnumber women (32 %) in tertiary education in mathematics, sciences and technical disciplines.

In all EU countries the employment rate for women and men increases as the level of educational attainment improves. Employment rates for women with high education are higher than men's with basic schooling in most countries. Even if the majority of women are very well educated, they are not fully used as a resource in the labour market.

Women have on average achieved a higher level of education than men in the tertiary education system, yet women still remain under-represented at the highest levels in academic and professional life. While at the beginning of their academic careers women account for 42 %, merely 15 % of the positions in the highest grade are occupied by women.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

When deciding on the indicators in May 2007 the Council of the European Union urged the MS to promote gender equality and to implement gender mainstreaming in their education and training policies at all levels, including measures to ensure equal access and participation for women and men, a gender-sensitive educational environment as well as unbiased content in education.

The Council also urges the MS to eliminate all kinds of direct or indirect discrimination in education and training, in academic institutions and in all regulations regarding educational or academic advancement, as well as in employment.

Furthermore the Council urged the MS to take concrete measures to implement gender mainstreaming while developing policies for the integration of migrant girls and women as well as migrant boys and men into the education system in order to overcome gender stereotypes.

5.3 WOMEN AND HEALTH (C)

Gender inequalities in health are still a persistent problem in EU MS. In many Member States preventive programs addressing women's health issues have been set up. But new challenges appear as well. There exists at present overwhelming evidence that violence against women is associated with ill-health of various kinds. This needs to be taken into account when women's health issues are mapped and compared to men's. Otherwise this area of women's health will remain a hidden topic, and the consequences of "diagnostic" and "treatment" efforts will be ineffective or counterproductive from this perspective.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

The Council of the European Union decided on the indicators in June 2006, invited the MS and the Commission to take the necessary measures to ensure a gender perspective in health policies and called upon governments to promote research on gender equality in health.

5.4 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (D)

The reporting to the UNECE clearly indicates that many of the MS aim at a more co-ordinated approach in tackling violence against women and at least half have developed national strategies or plans of action on this issue. Continued development in policy is visible, especially the criminalisation of violence against women and protection of and support to victims. However, one issue of concern is the lack of focus on the evaluation of policy and practice, to ensure that the measures are implemented as intended.

There seems to be growing recognition within the MS of diversity both as regards forms of violence against women and women subjected to violence. At the same time, more work is needed for the MS to be able to address in a systematic way all forms of violence against women mentioned in the Beijing Platform for Action.

As regards the development of integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women, this remains a challenge as well. Difficulties remain in linking the work on victim protection and support with, for example, child protection, family law proceedings, or practice in relation to immigration and asylum-seeking. This often leads to contradictory outcomes and lack of safety-oriented practice. Consequently, there is still work to be done to create an integrated and consistently victim- and safety-oriented approach to violence against women across policy domains.

The reporting to the UNECE shows that the commitment to combating violence against women includes the issue of trafficking and most MS report some measures to tackle trafficking in women and to assist victims of violence due to prostitution and/or trafficking. MS in Central and Eastern Europe tend to report progress in this area. An issue for the future is to ensure that the follow up provides information which gives a systematic overview of the extent to which the MS have implemented the Palermo protocol and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

Statistics on all forms of violence against women are crucial in monitoring progress towards fulfilling the three strategic objectives regarding violence against women in the Beijing PfA. In 2002, when the first EU indicators to monitor progress in this strategic area of concern were developed, the Council encouraged the MS to consider developing procedures for gathering data.

This was in order to ensure that such statistics could be regularly produced on the proposed indicators and – as regards the qualitative indicators – so that regular examinations could be conducted.

In the 10-year follow-up of the Beijing platform it was also noted that the existing data did not offer a comprehensive overview of the situation at the EU level. Furthermore, the report concluded that the development of adequate data-collection/statistics remains a challenging issue for the EU so as to allow identification of the extent of the problem as well as to monitor to what extent the preventative actions have been successful.

In 2004 the Council again encouraged the MS to improve the collection, compilation and dissemination of timely, reliable and comparable data. The situation at the 15-year follow-up is more or less the same as the situation in 2002 and 2004. A key issue for further work in this field is thus to ensure that in the near future the Eurostat database will include timely, reliable and comparable statistics on different aspects of violence against women, including data on sexual harassment and trafficking.

5.5 WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT (E)

Women are affected by armed conflict in a variety of ways. Contemporary conflicts affect civilian population in particular. Women constitute “strategic targets”, sometimes on a massive scale, as in the case of gang rape used as part of war tactics and “ethnic cleansing”. Many women and girls also become combatants’ domestic and sexual slaves.

But women should be actors in all stages of the conflicts, in particular in the processes of peace and reconstruction. Equal rights and increased participation by women and women’s organisations at all levels of responsibility are both essential goals and means of preventing and resolving conflicts and promoting a culture of peace.

The French Presidency made the following observations based on the survey in 2008:

- “Women and armed conflict” is not a specific issue in foreign and development policy. Instead it is addressed at different levels of government.
- There is often little coordination between these different levels of government. MS do not have an overall strategy for incorporation of the issue in their foreign and development policy.

- The incorporation of a gender perspective is effected in the training of the staff concerned, but to a lesser extent in the implementation of actions on the ground or in the reception of refugees and asylum seekers.
- Women are systematically under-represented in decision-making bodies that deal with this issue.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

When the Council of the European Union decided on the indicators in December 2008 it also encouraged all MS to draw up action plans or other measures for the implementation of UN SCR 1325 and urged the MS and the European Commission to give special attention to the specific needs of women and to mainstream women's civil, political, economic social and cultural rights from a gender equality perspective, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all policies, programmes and measures intended to contribute to conflict prevention and resolution, peace building and post-conflict reconstruction.

5.6 WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY (F)

All employed parents have a right to at least three months' unpaid leave on the birth of a child. Several MS have introduced measures in order to improve the right to, or to increase the take up of, leave by fathers. However, women's take-up is much greater than men's in all countries, which means that parental leave does not always advance gender equality. Long parental leave periods, used only by mothers, may reduce female labour force participation and affect future career paths and earnings adversely.

MS have made commitments to improve the provision of childcare and pre-school facilities. In many countries a high proportion of childcare facilities operate on a part-time basis only and opening hours are not always compatible with employment, especially not with full-time work. As far as elderly care is concerned, there is a weak institutional provision of such care. This has gender implications since the majority of the elderly are women as well as the majority of the informal providers of care to the elderly.

Both work and family are changing. Women have moved into the public world of paid work in most countries, but in general this has not been accompanied by men's assuming responsibilities for domestic and care work. The time use studies confirm the unequal sharing of paid and unpaid work. In most countries, average "tied time" is longer for women than for men and this

seems to be the case especially in the new MS, which seems to be related to women's long paid working hours.

Unpaid care work is one of the biggest barriers to gender equality and affects women's ability to participate in the labour market on the same terms as men. Men tend to work longer average hours in paid employment than women EU-wide, with women working shorter hours in paid employment in all countries. This is both a cause and effect of sex stereotypes about men's breadwinner role and women's care-giving role, reinforcing existing divisions of labour.

Progress has been made in recent years in the employment area. Employment rates have risen for women, thereby bringing the EU closer to the Lisbon targets. Unemployment has come down considerably, and the overall employment rate has been growing strongly. However, the economic outlook has changed markedly because of the financial and economic crisis.

Although it can be noted that the European institutions and the MS have increased their efforts to promote equal opportunities for women and men in employment and to encourage fathers to take a greater responsibility in childcare, most of the gender gaps are still there. Women experience systematic barriers in almost every aspect of work – this ranges from whether they have paid work at all, if they work full-time or part-time; the type of work they obtain or are excluded from; the availability of childcare; their wages, benefits and conditions of work; the absence of equitable pension entitlements. Discrimination is more severe in the case of women who are multiply disadvantaged by factors such as race, ethnicity or indigenous or disability status.

Pay differentials remain one of the most persistent forms of inequality between women and men. This is disappointing in the light of women's educational achievements and the gradual closing of the gender gap in work experience. Various factors contribute to the gap, and it is difficult to distinguish between pay differences resulting from different labour market characteristics and those due to indirect or direct discrimination, including differences in the evaluation of work in male- and female dominated sectors and occupations.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

In December 2008 the Council of the European Union decided on indicators concerning the reconciliation of work and family life and called on the MS to continue to take necessary measures to encourage men to share family and domestic responsibilities with women on an equal footing.

In addition, the Council encouraged enterprises to adopt family-friendly measures and to take account of the need to reconcile work and family life in

their working time arrangements and to take gender equality into consideration in family leave schemes, as well as the implications of part time work for men and women respectively, in order to avoid any negative effects that they may have, i.a. on the employment of women.

5.7 WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING (G)

It is important to note that both efforts and considerable progress have been made in most MS to increase participation by women in decision-making processes since 2003. The situation varies significantly between countries, between different decision-making bodies, including elected bodies, government bodies and corporate bodies, and between different levels of decision-making such as the national, regional, local and EU level. Thus, much remains to be done to improve the overall representation of women in decision-making across the Union.

In recent years, the under-representation of minority groups in power and decision-making has been put on the political agenda. Increased diversity of migrants, growing numbers of newcomers being naturalised and the increased proportion of second generation descendants of migrants in many MS signal the changing composition of the population and the need to redress the imbalance, if demographically representative elected bodies are to be promoted. In the field of gender, furthermore, the issue of migrant and ethnic minority women and decision-making needs to be taken into consideration. It is vital here to address two issues; first, to what extent decision-making bodies represent minority groups, and second, to what extent decision-making bodies represent women, including minority women.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

Reviewing the indicators on political decision-making in May 2008 the Council of the European Union also encouraged governments and political parties and the social partners to develop further and implement effective measures to increase women's involvement and participation in decision-making and leadership, including training and mentoring schemes and other initiatives to encourage women to participate in political processes.

In addition, quantitative and qualitative studies are needed on the outcome of strategies put in place in MS, including positive actions such as gender quotas. The exchange and dissemination of good practice should be promoted.

5.8 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (H)

An increasing number of MS now have both a Minister responsible for gender equality issues and gender equality bodies, units or departments placed on a high level in the government. The responsibility, status and agency of these gender equality bodies in relation to different policy areas vary greatly between the MS and there is still a need to enhance the status of these bodies in order to bring the policy area of gender equality to the forefront.

Replacing the independent bodies for protection against discrimination on the ground of sex with bodies for protection against multiple discrimination seems to be a trend among the MS. The impact of this transformation is still to be seen. The importance of acknowledging the heterogeneity of women in terms of age, class, disability, ethnicity/race, religion and sexual orientation is crucial to the recognition of all groups of women. At the same time there is a risk of downplaying gender as a structural dimension when several grounds of discrimination are covered by the same Act and in the same independent bodies.

The relationship between laws against discrimination on the ground of sex and other parts of the gender equality machinery, which often implies a link between understanding gender relations on both an individual and a collective level, could also be at risk with the shift towards a multi-discrimination approach.

Although gender mainstreaming is coordinated as an overall strategy by most MS, there are still some that have drawn up strategies on how gender mainstreaming should be implemented in all policy fields. Gender mainstreaming budget and finance policy is of decisive importance in promoting gender equality; it is crucial to highlighting how new investments in different policy areas affect men and women respectively and how these measures are scrutinised through processes of gender mainstreaming.

It is important not to take a linear development for granted in the implementation of gender mainstreaming and the overall institutionalisation of gender equality machineries. Although it is impossible to draw precise conclusions, not all MS have increased their efforts regarding gender machinery during the last five years. In some MS the National Action Plan for Gender Equality has not been updated. Several of the newer MS have now set up fundamental machinery for gender equality, have thus reached a basic level regarding the status of gender equality bodies and have introduced gender mainstreaming in some policy areas. In the case of those MS that have been working with gender equality and gender mainstreaming for a longer period

of time, not many new initiatives have been taken, for example in the development of gender mainstreaming strategy.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing Pfa

The Council of the European Union decided on indicators in December 2006 and recommended that the MS continue active cooperation with, and promote the involvement of, the civil society actors in the pursuit of equality between women and men.

In particular, it also urged all MS and the Commission to improve and strengthen the development and regular use of mainstreaming methods, particularly gender budgeting and gender impact assessment when drafting legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

The Council also encouraged the MS and the Commission to provide national and EU statistical offices with institutional and financial support so that all relevant official statistics related to individuals were collected, compiled analysed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems and issues relating to women and men and the promotion of gender equality.

5.9 HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN (I)

In general, human rights of women are reported on (to the UNECE) to a limited extent by the MS, when compared with reporting on the other critical areas of concern. One reason for this might be that human rights issues are a broad concept that covers all the other subjects described in the country reports.

A challenge highlighted in many country reports is the need to tackle multiple discrimination and the cross-cutting forms of marginalisation and inequalities such as ethnicity and disability. In addition, human rights issues that appear not to be covered in the reports, but which have been under discussion within the EU, include sexual rights, such as same-sex marriage, adoption of children by same-sex couples, and various forms of bodily integrity, such as reproductive self determination.

5.10 WOMEN AND THE MEDIA (J)

The media, advertising and other public spheres reflect the lack of gender equality in society, while at the same time helping to cement it. Research shows

that images and language have become coarser over the past ten years. In many UNECE reports, the need to combat this situation is addressed, and the need to bring about a dialogue with the media and the advertising industry about their role and responsibility in influencing children and young persons in particular. Public service radio and television have an important role to play in not spreading stereotypical images of men and women, or of reproducing and cementing power structures and gender roles in society.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

In May 2008 the Council adopted conclusions on Eliminating Gender Stereotypes in Society. The Council encouraged the development of policies and programmes for eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality in education curricula and practices, targeting schools, teachers, students and parents.

The Council also encouraged the European Institute for Gender Equality and national gender equality bodies to promote research, studies and analysis to examine further the effect that gender stereotypes have on efforts to achieve real equality. Moreover, the Council encouraged MS to promote gender-sensitive, empowering educational and training processes and teaching material. The media were not targeted explicitly in the conclusions.

5.11 WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT (K)

The Beijing +10 report refers to discussions on the topic and mentions suggestions like gender balancing indicators that could be developed to trace women's presence in decision making on the environment and that the gender impact of environmental decisions could be addressed by including a gender dimension in environmental impact assessments. So both gender balancing and gender mainstreaming strategies have been discussed in relation to strategic objectives for women and the environment.

To facilitate these strategies it is necessary to develop some common conceptualizations on what should be included in the concept environment. To define what should be included in the concept of environment it is necessary to go outside the classic environmental area of conservation and pollution. It is important to assess gender balance in environmental management and conservation but equally important to do so in fields like natural resource use, chemicals use and production, climate policies and sustainable consumption.

Gender mainstreaming should be a policy strategy that is used in all policy fields. If, for example, climate policy is leading to major mitigation and adaptation strategies the gender effects of this should be clear before strategies are formalized and investments made.

5.12 THE GIRL CHILD (L)

A review of text on the girl child in the EU MS shows few documents that are exclusively devoted to the problem and the situation of the girl child in the EU. Furthermore, most documents adopted at EU level concern the status and the situation of children in general

In all countries and all age groups girls state that they are “too fat” more often than boys do. The differences increase with age and the biggest difference is between 15 year old girls and boys. As regards change over time, more data is needed to draw conclusions about changes and about what possible differences in body dissatisfaction actually mean for girls’ self-image, health and well-being. Furthermore, how possible changes may be linked to changes in health amongst girls and boys (e.g. overweight according to BMI) or in cultural images of girls and boys (e.g. in the media), remains to be investigated.

In the period (2003 2006) performance in mathematics remained unchanged and the performance advantage of young men remained unchanged. Figures that can be used to monitor change in the proportion of girl students in tertiary education in the field of science, mathematics and computing and in the field of teacher training and education science in the whole of the reporting period 2005 2009 are not available at present.

Two issues clearly placed on the MS’s political agendas and the issues most frequently discussed by the MS reports to the UNECE are FGM and violence against children. The most frequently recurring form of violence against children in the reporting is sexual violence, either as prostitution and/or trafficking or in relation to the internet. Sexual exploitation of children in prostitution and trafficking and through the internet is clearly of major concern within the MS. Most countries that report progress in this area do not explicitly discuss these measures as intended to improve the situation of girl children in particular.

When it comes to the issue of diversity, the overall trend is that some MS look at the position of ethnic minority girls and/or girls living in poverty, while other grounds of discrimination are not mentioned.

EU commitments to achieve the objectives of the Beijing PfA

When the Council of the European Union decided on the indicators in May 2008 it also urged the MS and the European Commission to mainstream a gender perspective into all child and youth policies and measures, including those relating to the fight against poverty and violence, and to pay special attention to children from disadvantaged groups, including children with disabilities and children from immigrant and ethnic minority backgrounds.

In addition, the Council invited the MS and the Commission to ensure the disaggregation by sex and age of all data relating to children in all relevant sectors, including health, violence, social inclusion, poverty and education, in order to integrate a gender perspective in the planning, implementation and monitoring of legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

The Council also stressed that access to sexual and reproductive health care and the elimination of all forms of violence against the girl child, including trafficking and harmful traditional practices, were crucial for the empowerment of girls and women.

VI Conclusions

6.1 DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE MEMBER STATES

All the Member States have a policy for gender equality and are committed to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. However, the situation of women also differs depending on the social and economic situation of the Member States. As we have shown in this report, the Member States may focus on different policy areas, but the overall impression is that all countries are making active efforts to implement gender equality within the framework of the PFA.

Despite certain differences of emphasis between countries in their policies to improve the situation of women, it is quite obvious that all the Member States are united in seeking to implement gender equality by affirming women's right to work and to earn their own income. In this area, EU cooperation has been a source of inspiration and ideas for the Member States, and measurable targets have also been set.

Another shared area of focus is the problem of violence against women, including domestic violence. This is a policy area in which the Member States have taken new initiatives and developed their legislation in recent years, and they are benefiting from cooperation and the exchange of experience, particularly concerning trafficking in women for prostitution. The problem is so prevalent and – where trafficking in women is concerned – transcends national borders to such an extent that the Member States have recognised the need to work together.

All Member States have tried in one way or another to increase the proportion of women decision-makers – particularly in political life – and all the Member States have also put in place national mechanisms for implementing gender equality.

An increasing number of Member States now have both a Minister who is responsible for gender equality issues, and gender equality bodies, units or departments placed high in the structure of government. The responsibility, status and mandate of these gender equality bodies in relation to different policy areas vary to a large extent between the Member States and there is still a need to improve the status of these bodies in order to bring gender equality to the forefront.

Although gender mainstreaming is articulated as an overall strategy by most Member States, relatively few have worked out a detailed strategy on how gender mainstreaming should be implemented in all policy fields. Gender mainstreaming in the budget process and in finance policy is of decisive importance in promoting gender equality. It is crucial to highlight how new investments in different policy areas affect men and women respectively and how these measures are scrutinised through the processes of gender mainstreaming.

During the last five years, a lot has been achieved in the field of gender equality, but progress is slow. Women are still in a disadvantaged position compared to men in the areas addressed in the PfA. If the promotion of gender equality takes time, it is sometimes also a question of a lack of explicit political demand or a lack of resources.

6.2 DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union enshrined in the EC Treaty and one of the objectives and tasks of the Community: mainstreaming equality between women and men in all its activities represents a specific mission for the Community.

The EU has developed a strong legal framework on gender equality and has supported the further development and consolidation of institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the Member States, thus contributing to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. With EU financing, many Member States have strengthened their national mechanisms. The Commission has supported different projects and innovative practices within the field of gender equality.

The Commission collaborates with the Member States within the High-Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. The Group has concentrated its work on the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the follow-up to the Commission's Roadmap for Gender Equality and the European Pact for Gender Equality adopted in March 2006. Its meetings have also provided an opportunity to debate a wide range of policy issues and to co-ordinate the work of the EU Presidencies on gender equality. To ensure high visibility, coherence and continuity between successive Presidencies' work on gender equality, the two trio Presidencies (DE, PT, SI and FR, CZ, SE) have presented a declaration and a common programme for the Trio Presidencies.

At the request of the European Council, the European Commission reports each year to the Spring European Council on progress towards gender equality and presents the challenges and priorities for the future. The 2009 Report on Equality between Women and Men gives an overview of recent developments in the EU. The report underlines the contribution of gender equality policy to economic and social development, and points out that, in today's global economic slowdown, it is more important than ever to keep up the political pressure for equality between women and men.

Several European and national social partner organisations receive EU funding to implement their own projects on gender equality. Organisations representing civil society have been funded with a view to maintaining a dialogue and supporting action to promote gender equality.

A number of activities have been carried out to strengthen the legislation on gender equality and its application since 2005. In particular, a Community network of bodies responsible for gender equality has been created to ensure uniform application of European law on equal treatment between women and men. The Community legal acquis has been strengthened, in particular by the adoption of Directive 2006/54/EC and by implementation at national level of Directives 2002/73/EC and 2004/113/EC.

A Commission report on the state of progress and the quality of the transposition by the Member States of the Directive on equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services will be presented in 2010.

The European Institute for Gender Equality has been established and its Management Board and Director have started their work. The exchange of knowledge and best practices within the EU on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action will be supported by the Institute.

The Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men (2006 –2010) has proven to be a significant political framework for the Commission's work for gender equality and a reference for Member States, which adopted the European Pact for Gender Equality at the European Council in March 2006.

6.3 CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

European cooperation brings opportunities for the joint development of policies, legislation, the exchange of experience, etc. to enable our countries to make progress in the various areas identified in the Beijing Platform.

Challenges concerning the critical areas of concern

When responding to current global challenges, including climate change and its environmental aspects and the economic and financial crisis, it is important to pay attention to the gender impact in designing policies, both at EU and national level. Furthermore, it is also necessary to enhance the gender dimensions of development assistance and the enlargement policies of the EU in order to promote the empowerment of women worldwide.

Gender equality policies have to take into consideration the needs of women in minority groups. Multiple discrimination of women and girls based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation needs to be further studied and taken into account in policies and programmes.

Many of the Member States mention also the responsibilities of men in achieving gender equality. Men have to be active in finding solutions, especially in the endeavour to combat violence against women. Furthermore, when it comes to balancing work, family and domestic responsibilities, men must carry their share of the burden.

Challenges related to the critical areas of concern have been identified and described in the reports from the Member States to the UNECE. Although there is no EU agreement on these challenges it is interesting to see what the Member States have in mind as regards the continued implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Some of the challenges referred to by the Member States are listed below under separate headings.

The main challenges in the area of Women and the economy are to:

- reinforce policies to enable women and men to balance their work, family and private life; to make it possible for women to take up, remain at and return to work, and to offer men realistic opportunities to share family and domestic responsibilities;
- enable women to reach economic independence and to tackle the gender pay gap through a multifaceted approach, addressing underlying factors including sectoral and occupational segregation, education and training and pay systems;
- pay attention to women who are vulnerable to poverty; single mothers, women in rural areas, ethnic minority women, migrant women and elderly women.

The main challenges in the area of Women and violence are to:

- develop preventative methods to combat gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking in women for prostitution, for example with the help of national action plans. Coordination and cooperation between social services, health workers and the police is needed;
- continue to develop and fully implement laws and other measures to combat honour-related violence and oppression and eradicate harmful customary or traditional practices;
- ensure political commitment and funding for sexual and reproductive health information and research.

The main challenges in the area of Women in power and decision-making are to:

- ensure equal access to the political, economic and social participation of women in all spheres of life and at all levels of decision-making and to implement national plans to promote gender balance in decision-making with the establishment of targets and appropriate monitoring;
- ensure the representation of women from minority groups in political and economic decision-making.

The main challenges in the area of Institutional mechanisms for gender equality are to:

- ensure that gender equality bodies and structures have the human and financial resources and capacities necessary to function effectively;
- have strong political commitment, as well as clear mandates to ensure the implementation of legislation, to develop specific actions and to apply gender mainstreaming;
- reinforce the implementation of gender mainstreaming in legislative, budgetary and other processes and specific actions to achieve gender equality;
- further develop methods and tools for gender mainstreaming such as for example gender budgeting, gender impact assessment and policy evaluations;
- enhance dialogue and cooperation between national mechanisms, civil society and the social partners;
- evaluate the work and achievements of the governmental bodies against all areas of discrimination from a gender perspective.

Challenges concerning the indicators

One way of measuring progress in the EU has been to develop indicators. By June 2009 the EPSCO Council of the EU had adopted indicators in 9 areas.

Only in three of the areas are there no developed indicators, namely, the Human Rights of Women, Women and the Media and Women and the Environment.

The main benefit of this work is fairly obvious: the indicators make it possible to measure progress at EU level. However, the picture is still an incomplete one; it is impossible to capture the entire breadth of the work being done by the Member States. In several critical areas of concern the EU-agreed indicators do not cover all the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and statistical data is not always available at the EU level, it is sometimes missing even at the national level. This makes it difficult to fully monitor the effectiveness of policy developments in the Member States that are relevant to the Platform for Action.

Future work on the indicators will be discussed in the Commission's High-Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. Two questions have yet to be solved: how to organise the follow-up work, and how to provide EU data corresponding to the indicators? The use of the indicators in relevant policy processes must be promoted at both EU and Member State level, and the missing indicators have to be developed in the remaining critical areas of concern of the BPfA, in particular on women and the environment and on women and the media. Existing indicators must also be regularly reviewed, as appropriate. Finally, it is necessary to develop comparable and reliable sex-disaggregated statistics to support the indicators.

Annex I

Indicators developed at EU level in the framework of the Beijing Platform for Action

- 1999 Women in political decision-making (FI), reviewed in 2008 under Slovenia's Presidency of the Council of the EU
- 2000 Women in the economy (reconciliation of work and family life) (PT, FR), reviewed in 2008 under France's Presidency of the Council of the EU
- 2001 Women in the economy (on equal pay) (SE, BE),
- 2002 Violence against women (ES, DK)
- 2003 Women and men in economic decision-making (EL, IT)
- 2004 Violence against Women; Sexual harassment in the workplace (IE, NL)
- 2006 Women and Health (AT)
- 2006 Institutional mechanisms for women (FI)
- 2007 Education and training (DE)
- 2007 Women and Poverty (PT)
- 2008 The Girl Child (SI)
- 2008 Women and Armed conflicts (FR)

Data at EU level have been updated in this report for the following indicators: Women and health and Women in the Economy (on equal pay).

Annex II

Abbreviations

BAME	(Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic)
BEIS	The BEIS-typology is a classification system for government functions that is used to categorise senior ministers, junior ministers and ministries and their staff in different fields of action.
BMI	Body mass index
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DG Employment	The European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment
EC	European Community
ECHI	European Community Health Indicators
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
EPSCO	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council
ESDP	The European Security and Defence Policy
ETUC	The European Trade Union Confederation
EU27	Includes the following member states: AT Austria BE Belgium BG Bulgaria CY Cyprus CZ Czech Republic DK Denmark DE Germany EE Estonia EL Greece ES Spain FI Finland FR France HU Hungary IE Ireland IT Italy

	LV	Latvia
	LT	Lithuania
	LU	Luxembourg
	MT	Malta
	NL	The Netherlands
	PL	Poland
	PT	Portugal
	RO	Romania
	SK	Slovakia
	SI	Slovenia
	SE	Sweden
	UK	The United Kingdom
EU 15		15 Member States before the 2004 enlargement
EU-LFS		The European Union Labour Force Survey
EU-SILC		The European Union Survey on Income and Living Conditions
EUROSTAT		The European Union Statistical office
FGM		Female genital mutilation
GDP		Gross domestic product
Gender CC		Gender and Climate Change
GPG		Gender Pay Gap
HLY		Healthy Life Years
HBSC		Health Behaviour in School-aged Children
ICT		Information and communication technologies
IDEA		Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPPF		International Planned Parenthood Federation
ISCED		International Standard Classification of Education
ISEG		Instituto Superior de Economia e Gestão
LO		Landsorganisationen i Sverige (Swedish Trade Union Confederation)
MOSAIC		Diversity Project in Malta, part of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all 2007.
MS		Member States
NATO		The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NACE		Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community
NGO		Non Governmental Organisation

NJCM	Nederlands Juristen Comité voor de Mensen-rechten (Netherlands Committee of Jurists for Human Rights)
NOPSA	Nordic Political Science Association
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PfA	Platform for Action
SACO	Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation (The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations)
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TERM	The Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism
TRANSGEN	Gender Mainstreaming European Transport Research and Policies
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UN SCR 1325	The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security
UN SCR 1820	The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 on women, peace and security
WHO	World Health Organisation

Annex III

**TABLE 3.1 Personnel resources of the governmental gender equality body
(full-time, all-year employees in person years)**

Total population at 1 January 2005

EU25	Population (1000 000)	Employees (person years)	Employees/ Population (1000 000)	Deviation from median (2,6)
Luxembourg	0.45	9.5	21.1	18.5
Malta	0.40	6	15.0	12.4
Greece	11.00	63	5.7	3.1
Portugal	11.00	63	5.7	3.1
Slovenia	2.00	9	4.5	1.9
Cyprus	0.70	3	4.3	1.7
Austria	8.20	35	4.3	1.7
Estonia	1.30	5	3.8	1.2
France	62.00	214	3.5	0.9
Belgium	10.00	30	3.0	0.4
Denmark	5.40	16	3.0	0.4
Sweden	9.00	24	2.7	0.1
Spain	43.00	113	2.6	0.0
Finland	5.20	13	2.5	-0.1
Ireland	4.10	9	2.2	-0.4
Netherlands	16.00	28	1.8	-0.9
Poland	38.00	50	1.3	-1.3
Latvia	2.30	3	1.3	-1.3
Italy	58.00	75	1.3	-1.3
Hungary	10.00	12	1.2	-1.4
Slovakia	5.40	4	0.7	-1.9
Lithuania	3.40	2	0.6	-2.0
United Kingdom	60.00	35	0.6	-2.0
Germany	83.00	45	0.5	-2.1
Czech Republic	10.00	5	0.5	-2.1

Source: Report by the Finnish Presidency 2006 on Institutional Mechanisms

TABLE 3.2 Status of commitment of the Government on gender mainstreaming in public administration

EU25	Legal obligation	De facto binding decision	Recommendation	No articulated commitment
Austria		x		
Belgium	x			
Bulgaria	x			
Czech Republic		x		
Cyprus			x	
Denmark	x			
Estonia	x			
Finland	x			
France		x		
Germany	x			
Greece		x		
Hungary			x	
Ireland		x		
Italy			x	
Latvia	x			
Lithuania		x		
Luxembourg				
Malta			x	
Netherlands		x		
Poland			x	
Portugal		x		
Romania				x
Slovakia				
Slovenia	x			
Spain	x			
Sweden		x		
United Kingdom	x			

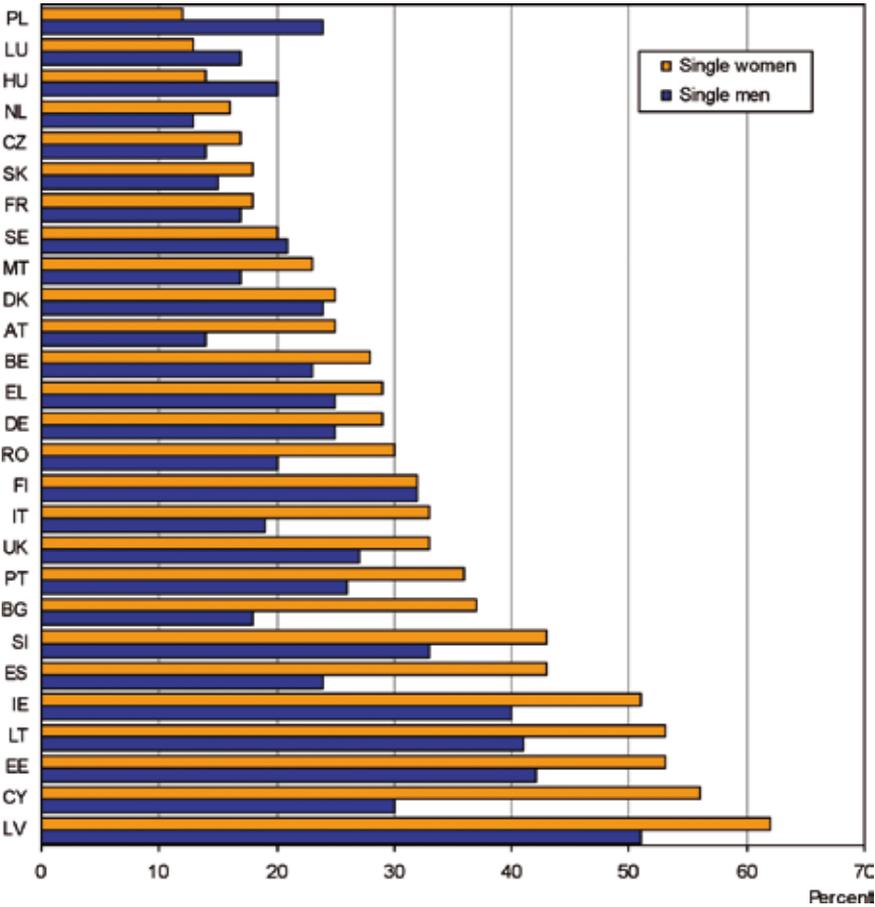
Source: MS reports to UNECE 2009

TABLE 3.3 Structure and content of gender mainstreaming

EU25	Inter-ministerial coordination structure	Contact persons in the ministries	No structures	Gender budgeting	Gender-impact assessment in law drafting	Gender impact assessment in the drafting of programmes and projects
Austria	x	x		x		
Belgium			x			
Bulgaria			x			
Czech Republic	x	x				
Cyprus		x				
Denmark	x					
Estonia						x
Finland	x	x		x		
France	x			x		
Germany	x	x				
Greece			x			
Hungary			x			
Ireland			x			
Italy		x				
Latvia		x				
Lithuania	x	x				
Luxembourg	x	x				
Malta		x				
Netherlands	x					
Poland	x	x				
Portugal		x				
Romania						
Slovakia		x				
Slovenia			x			
Spain	x	x		x	x	x
Sweden	x	x				
United Kingdom		x				

Source: MS reports to UNECE 2009

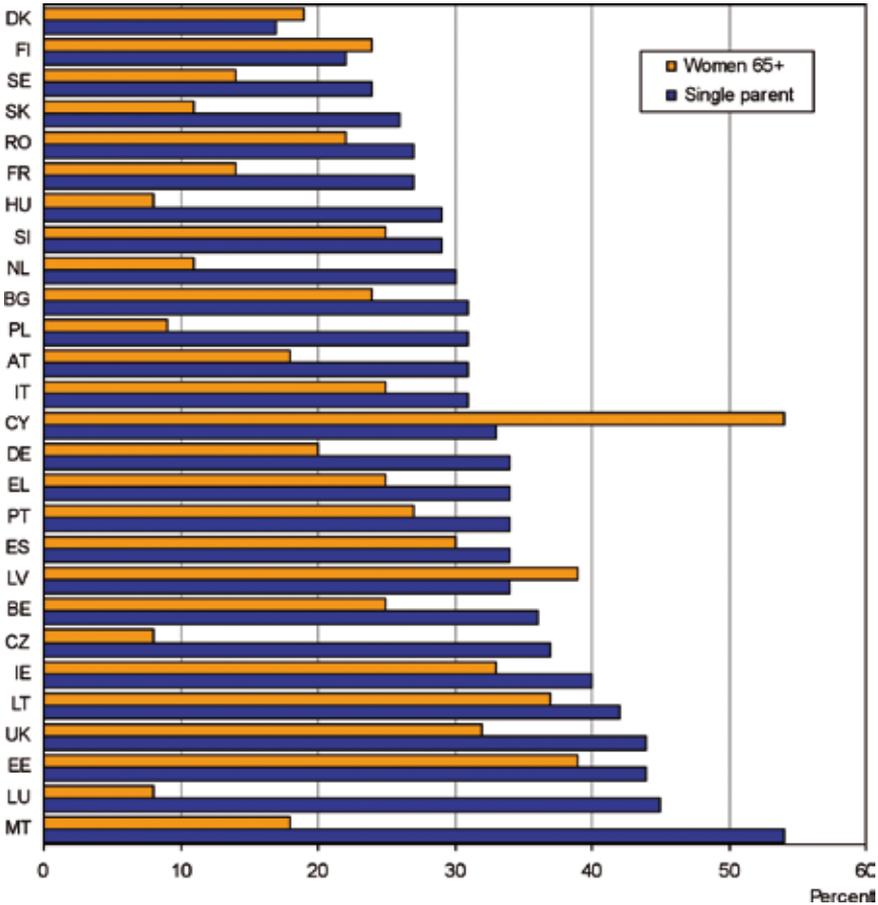
Figure 4.1.1 At-risk-of-poverty rate (cut-off point: 60 % of median equivalised income after social transfers), single women and men, no children, 16–84 years, 2007*



*No data for EU 27. Data for DE preliminary.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

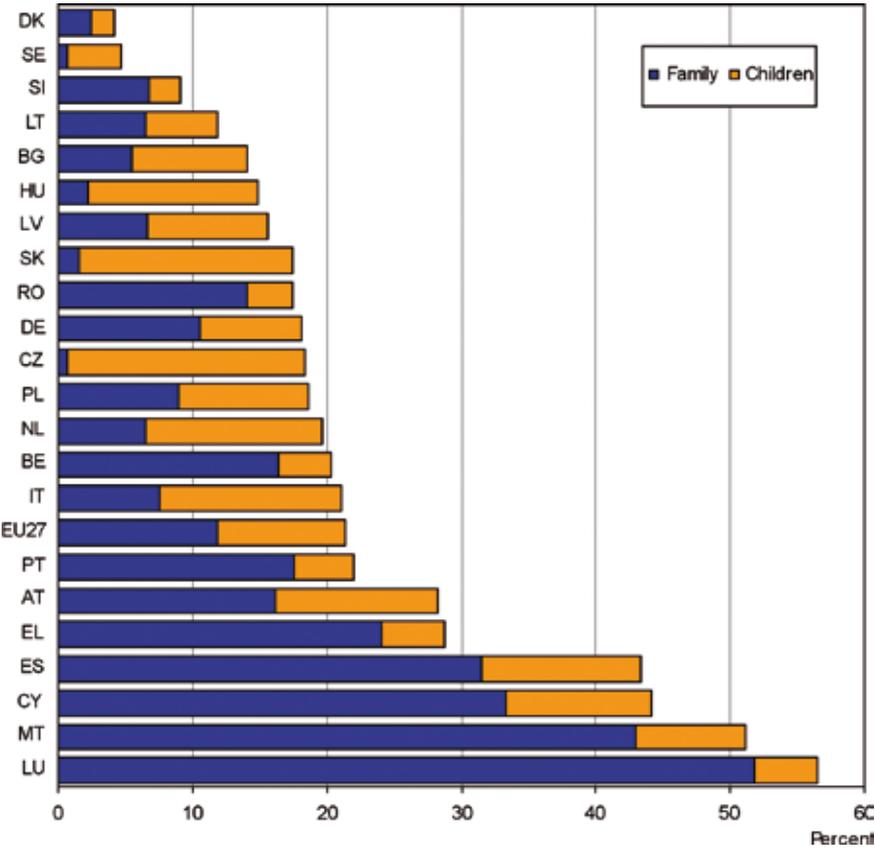
Figure 4.1.2 At risk of poverty rate (cut-off point: 60 % of median equivalised income after social transfers), single parents and women 65+ years, 2007*



*Women 65+.BG, RO, DE preliminary value.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

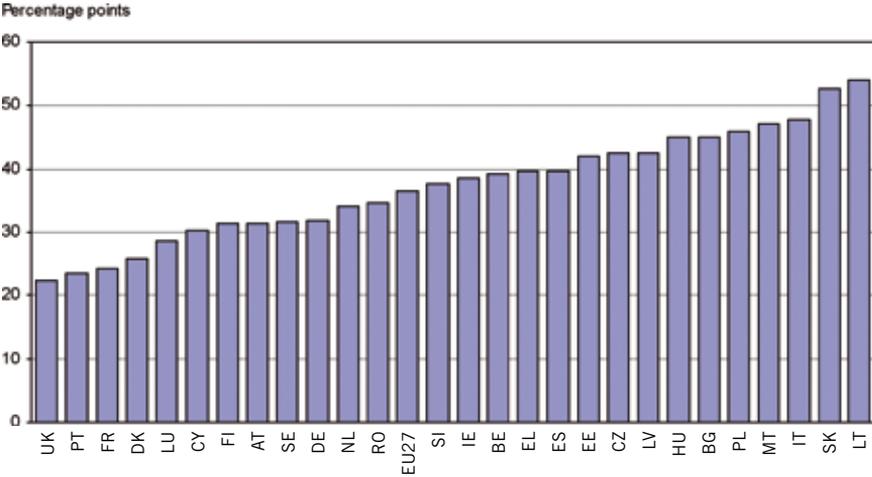
Figure 4.1.3 Share of women outside the labour market and not looking for work for family or personal reasons or caring for children or incapable adults, 15+ years, 2007*



*No data from Ireland or the UK in either “not looking for work for family or personal reasons” or “not looking for work because of caring for children or incapable adults”. No data from EE and FR for “not looking for work for family or personal reasons”. Values uncertain for EU27, NL, RO, SK, UK.

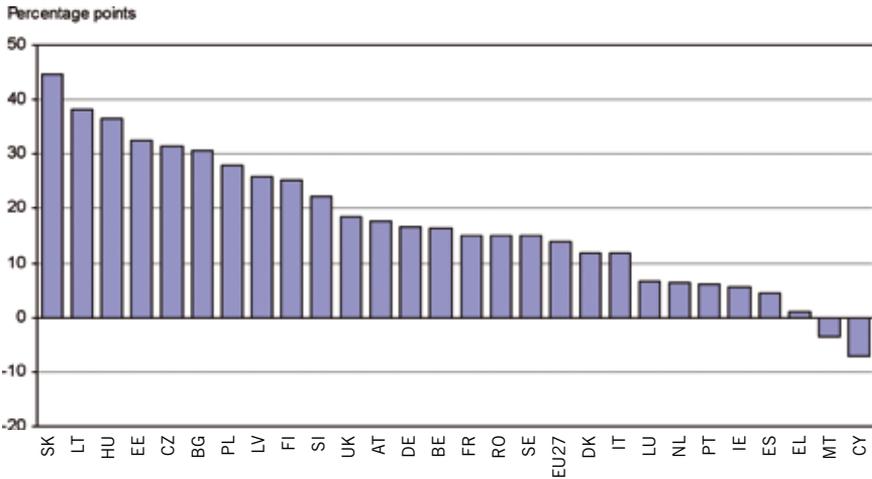
Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Figure 4.2.1 Employment gap between women with educational level ISCED 5–6 and women with educational level ISCED 0-2, 40–64 years, 2006



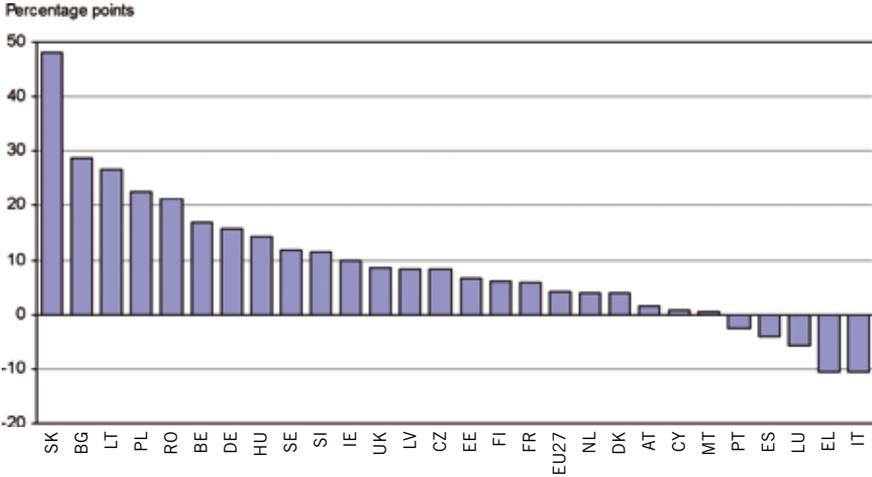
Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Figure 4.2.2 Employment gap between women with educational level ISCED 5–6 and men with educational level ISCED 0–2, 40–64 years, 2006



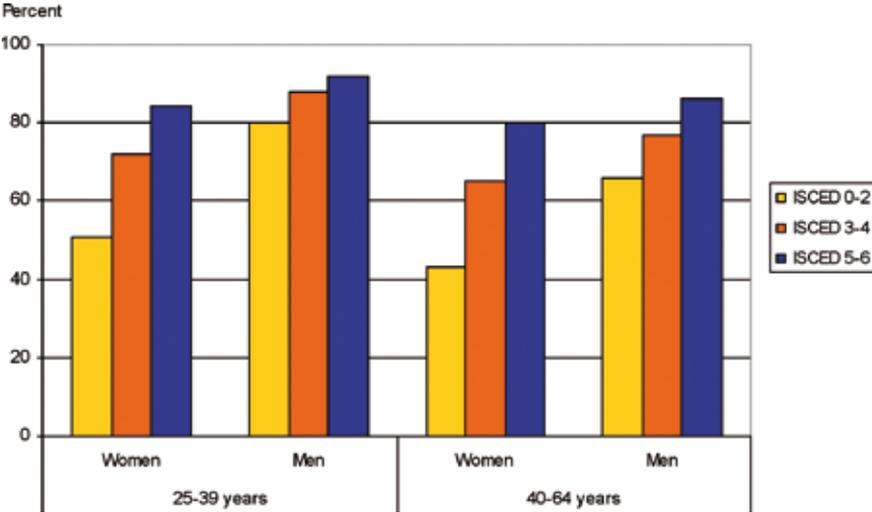
Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Figure 4.2.3 Employment gap between women with educational level ISCED 5–6 and men with educational level ISCED 0–2, 25–39 years, 2006



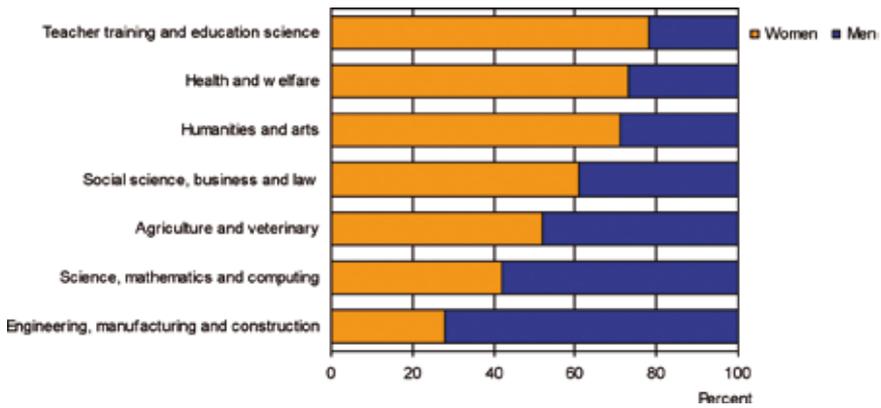
Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Figure 4.2.4 Employment rates of women and men (25–39 and 40–64 years) by level of education, EU average, 2006



Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

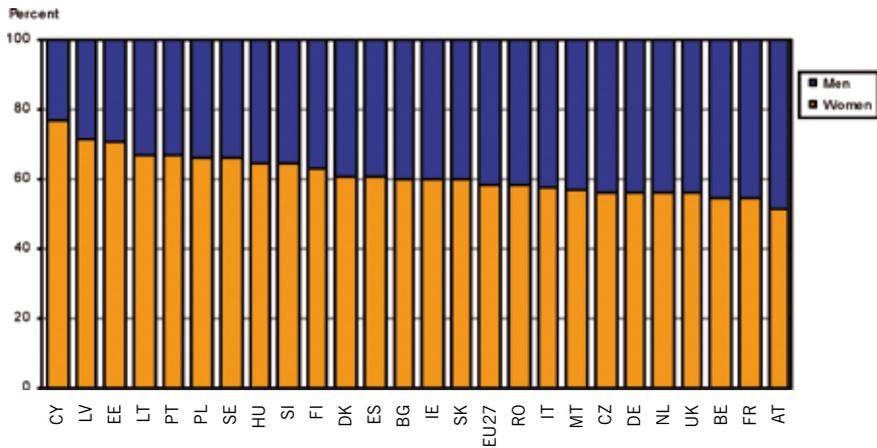
Figure 4.2.5 Proportion of female and male ISCED 5a-graduates of all ISCED 5a-graduates by broad field of study, EU average 2006*



*No data from LU.

Source: Eurostat, Education indicators

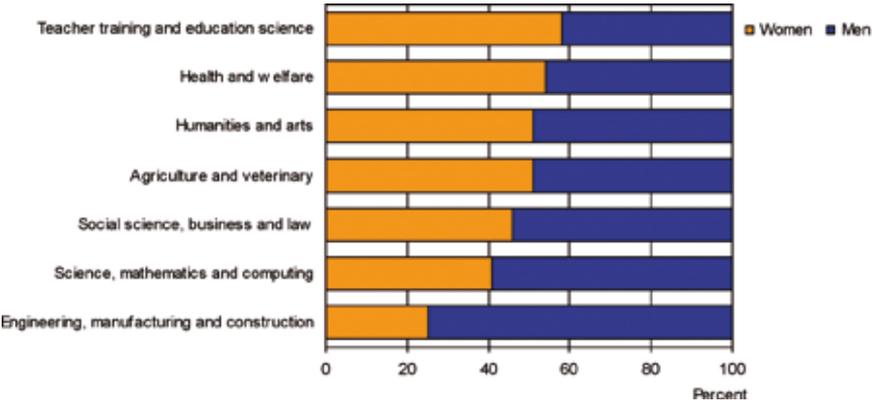
Figure 4.2.6 Proportion of female and male ISCED 5a-graduates of all ISCED 5a-graduates by country and EU 27, 2006*



*No data from LU.

Source: Eurostat, Education indicators

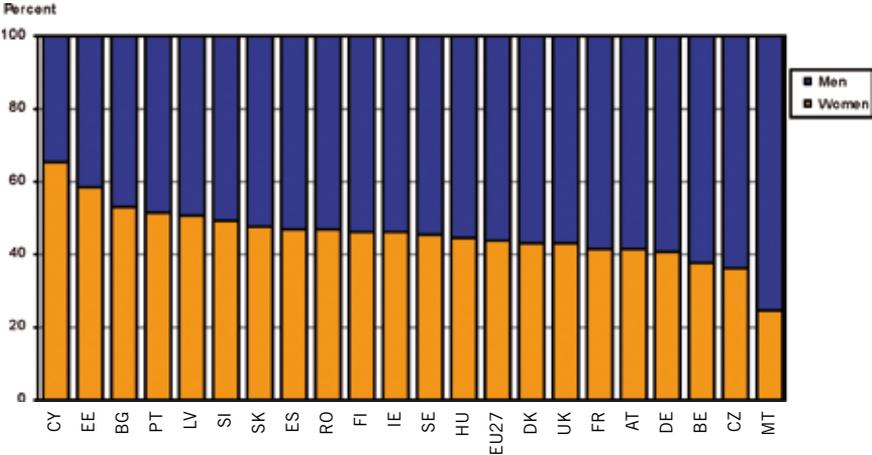
Figure 4.2.7 Proportion of female and male ISCED 6 graduates of all ISCED 6 graduates by broad field of study, EU average 2006*



*No data from EL, IT, LT, LU, NL or PL.

Source: Eurostat, Education indicators

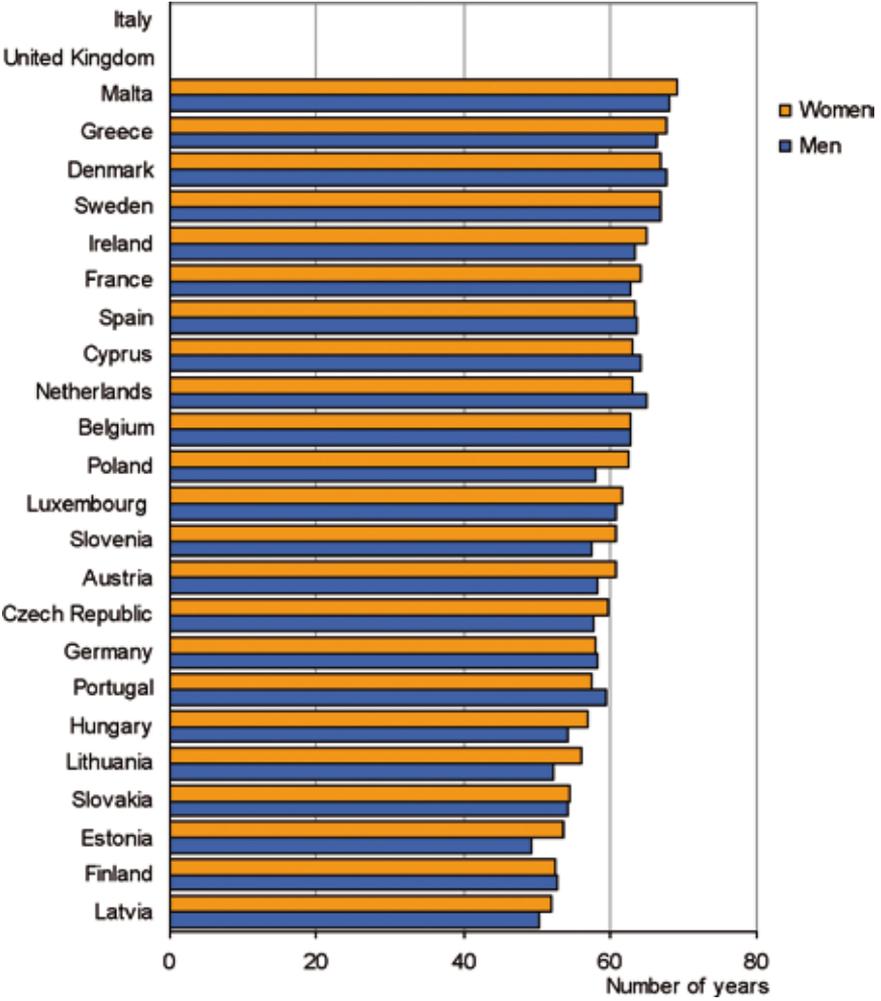
Figure 4.2.8 Proportion of female and male ISCED 6 graduates of all ISCED 6 graduates by country, 2006*



*No data from EL, IT, LT, LU, NL or PL.

Source: Eurostat, Education indicators

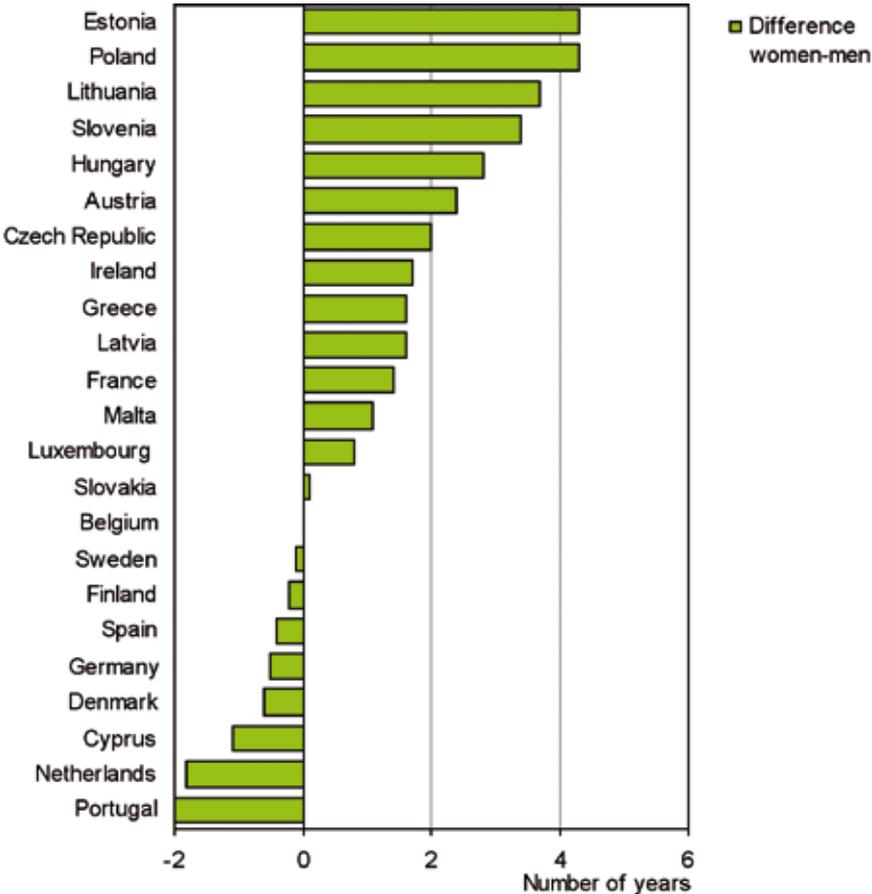
Figure 4.3.1 Number of years with good health 2006



For 2006 no data are available from Italy or the United Kingdom, and no data are available at all from Bulgaria or Romania.

Source: Eurostat, Demographic data and EU-SILC

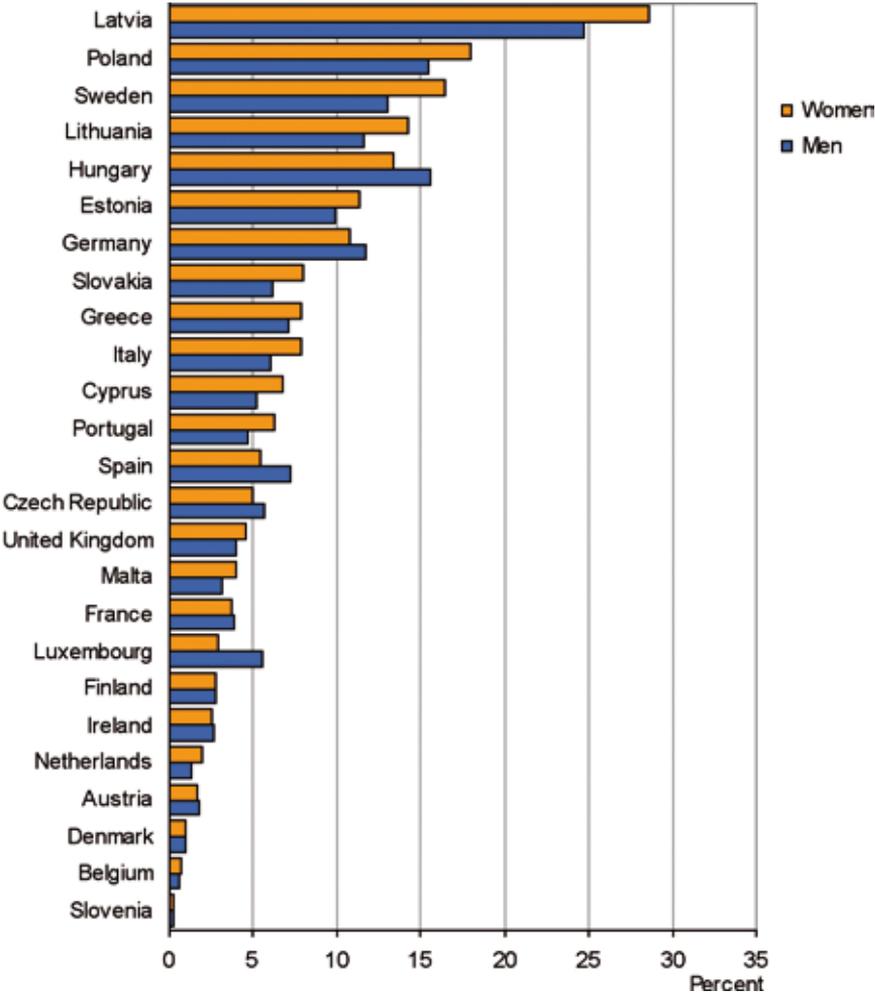
Figure 4.3.2 Difference between women and men in number of years with good health, 2006



No data from Italy, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria or Romania.

Source: Eurostat, Demographic data and EU-SILC

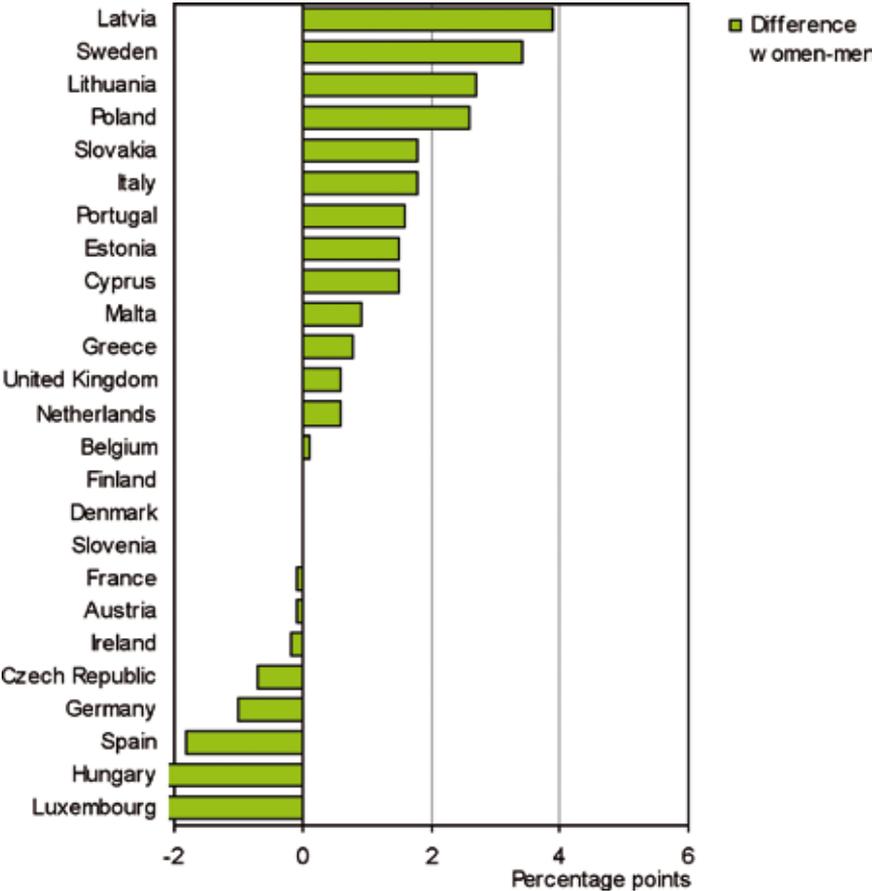
Figure 4.3.3 Proportion of persons who needed health care but for whom the demand was not met, 2006



No data from Bulgaria or Romania.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

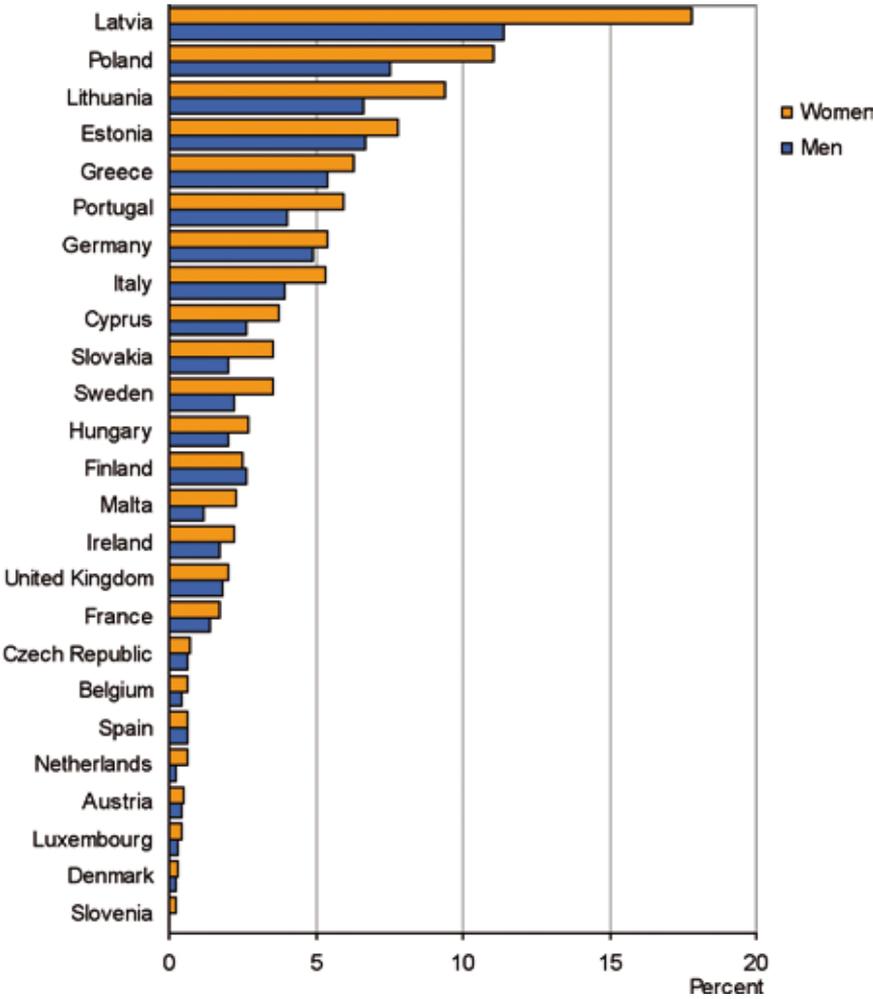
Figure 4.3.4 Difference between the proportions of women and men who needed health care but for whom the demand was not met, 2006



No data from Bulgaria or Romania.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

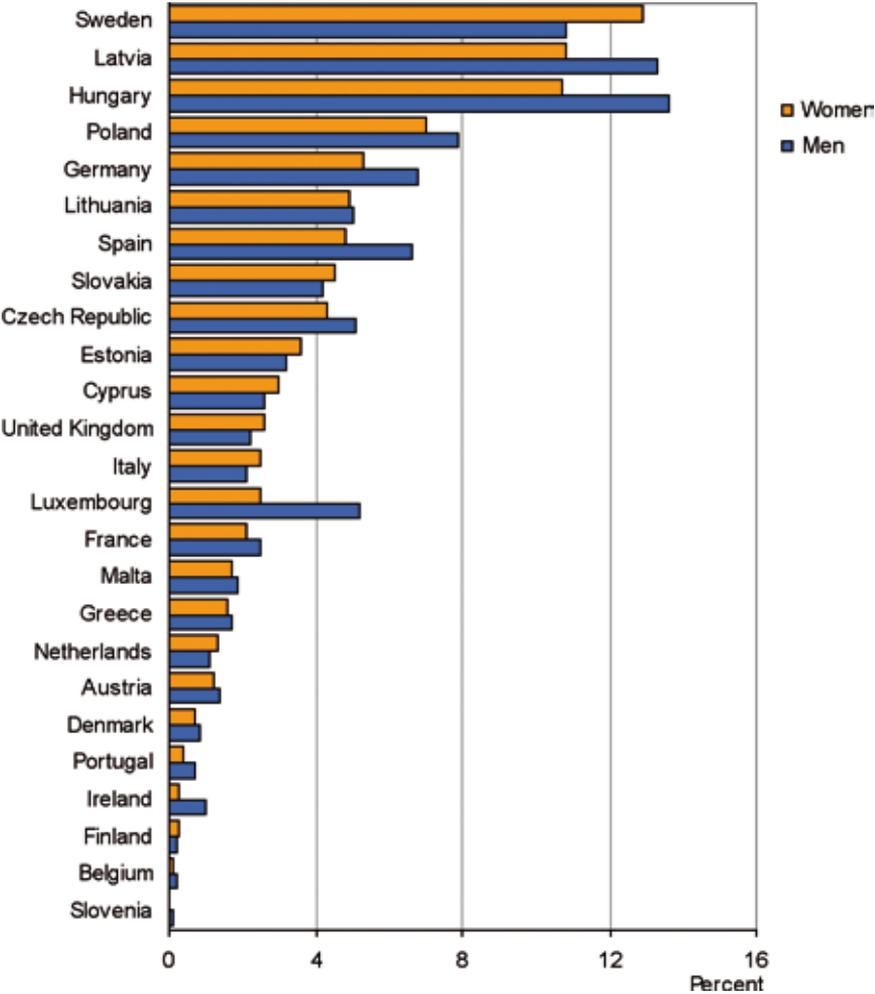
Figure 4.3.5 Proportion of persons in need of health care but with forced unmet demands (owing to problems with availability, health care not affordable, waiting list or too great travelling distance), 2006



No data from Bulgaria or Romania.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

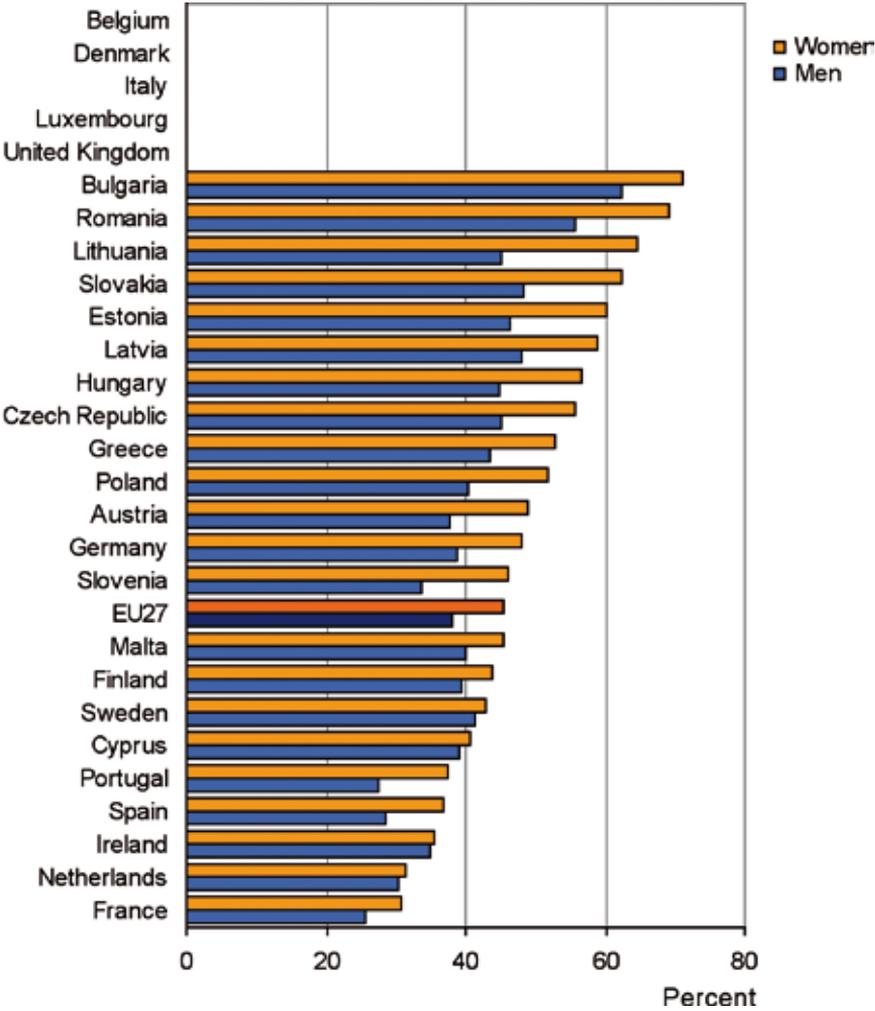
Figure 4.3.6 Proportion of persons in need of health care, but with unmet demands due to: no time for it, wanted to wait and see, did not know a good doctor, or any other reason, 2006



No data from Bulgaria or Romania.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

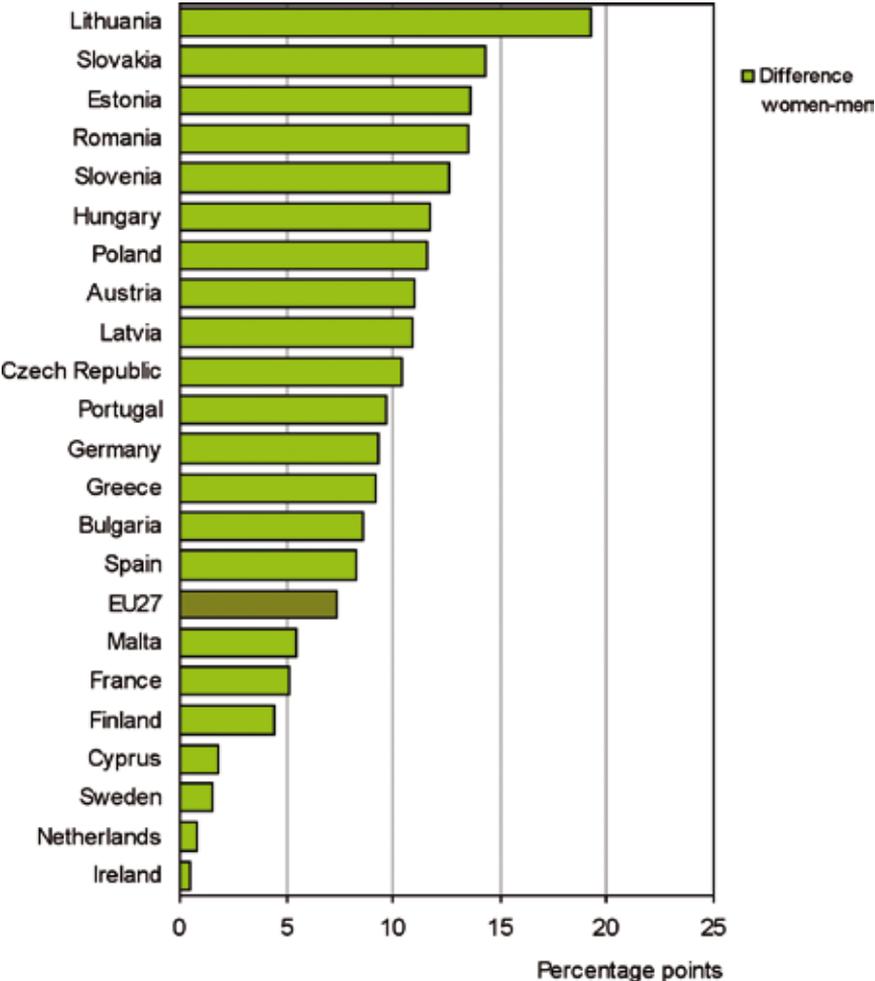
Figure 4.3.7 Proportions of women and men who die from cardio-vascular disease among all deaths, 2006



No data from BE, DK, IT, LU or UK.

Source: Eurostat, Data on Causes of death

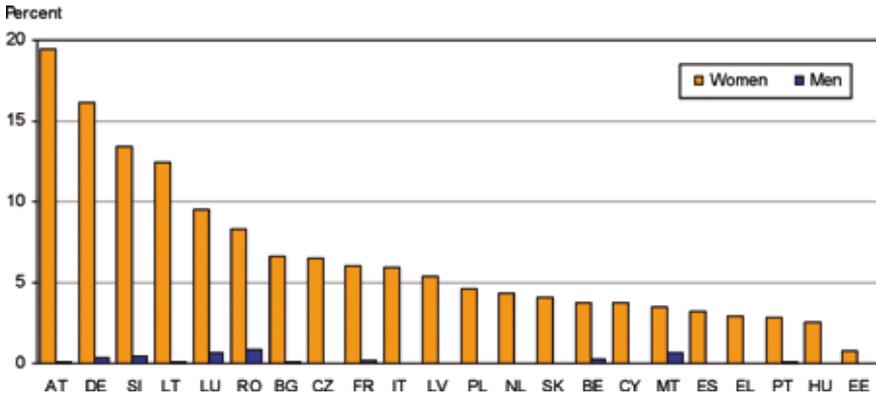
Figure 4.3.8 Proportions of women and men who die from cardio-vascular disease among all deaths, 2006



No data from Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg or the United Kingdom.

Source: Eurostat, Data on Causes of death,

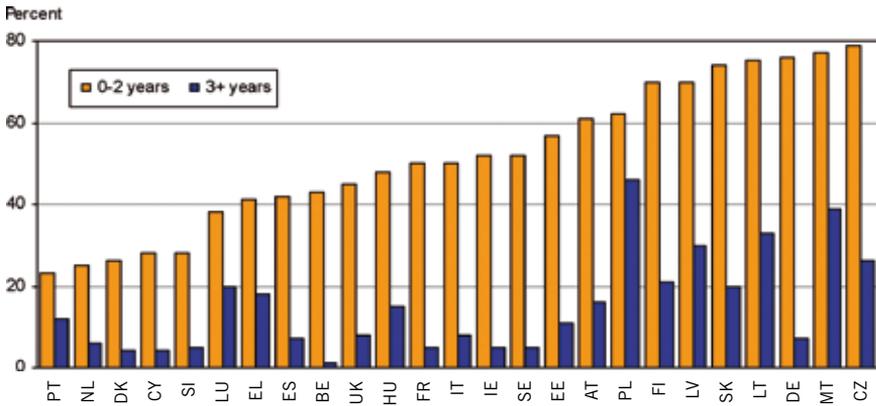
Figure 4.6.1 Employed women and men on maternity and parental leave as a proportion of all employed parents, 2006*



*No data from DK, FI, SE or UK.

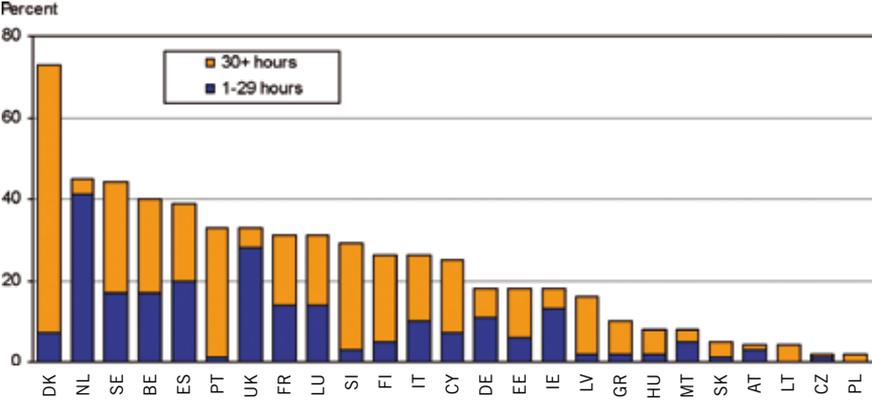
Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Figure 4.6.2 Children 0–2 years and 3 to compulsory school age, taken care of only by parents, 2006



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

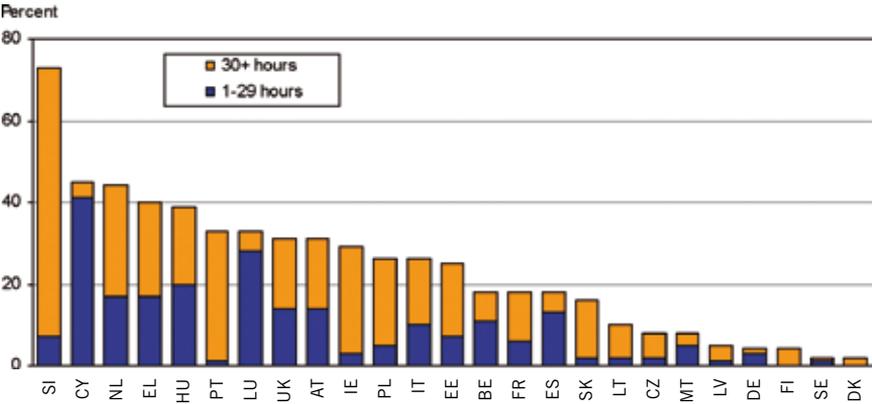
Figure 4.6.3 Proportion of children 0–2 years in formal childcare, 1–29 hours and 30+ hours, 2006*



*Formal childcare = education at pre-school, childcare at centre-based services outside school hours and childcare at day care centre. No data from BG or RO.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

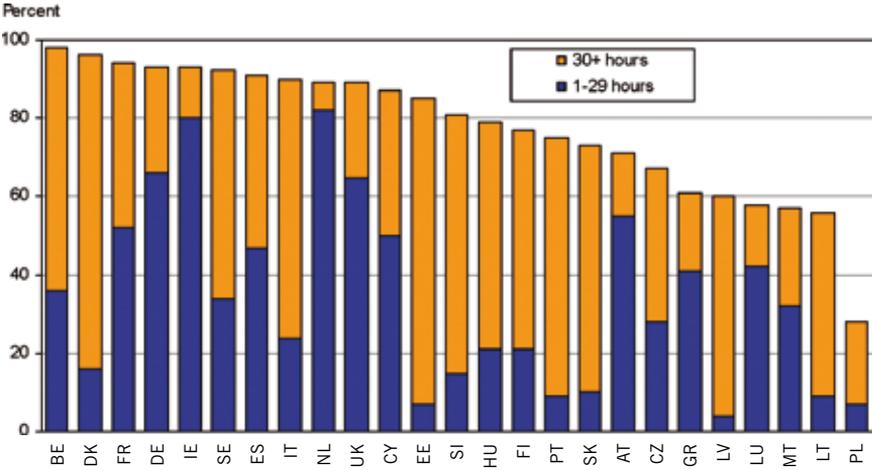
Figure 4.6.4 Proportion of children 0–2 years in other arrangements for childcare, 1–29 hours and 30+ hours, 2006*



*Other arrangements are childcare by a professional child-minder at the child's home or at the child-minder's home or childcare by grandparents, other household members (other than parents), other relatives, friends or neighbours. No data from BG or RO.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

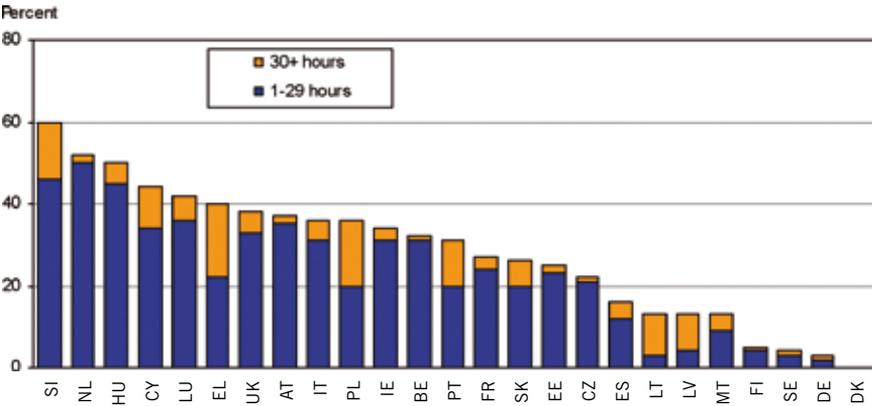
Figure 4.6.5 Proportion of children 3 years old to compulsory school age in formal childcare, 1–29 hours and 30+ hours, 2006*



*Formal childcare = education at pre-school, childcare at centre-based services outside school hours and childcare at day care centre. No data from BG or RO.

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

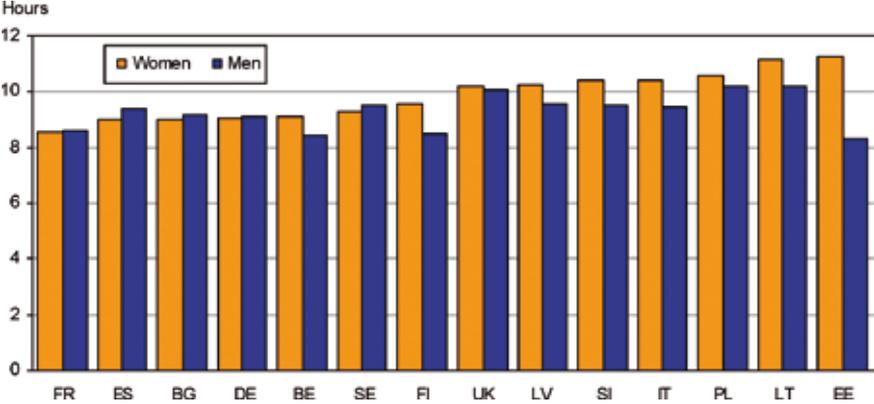
Figure 4.6.6 Proportion of children 3 years old to compulsory school age in other arrangements for childcare, 1–29 hours and 30+ hours, 2006*



*Other arrangements are childcare by a professional child-minder at the child's home or at the child-minder's home or childcare by grand-parents, other household members (other than parents), other relatives, friends or neighbours. No data from BG or RO.

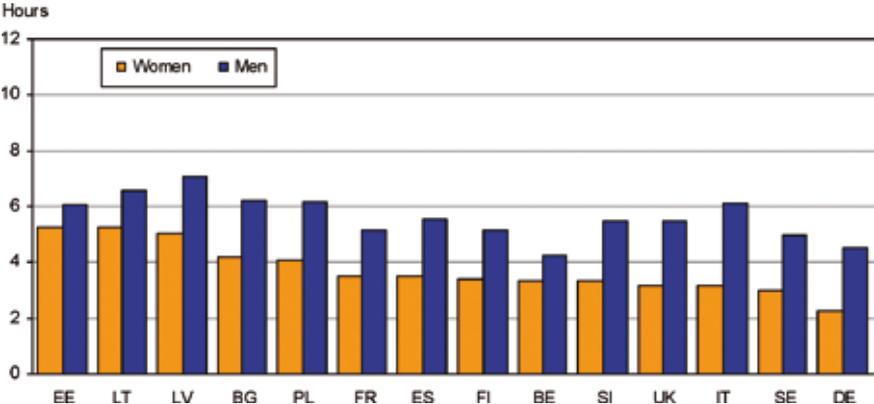
Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

Figure 4.6.7 Total “tied time”, working couples with children 0–6 years old



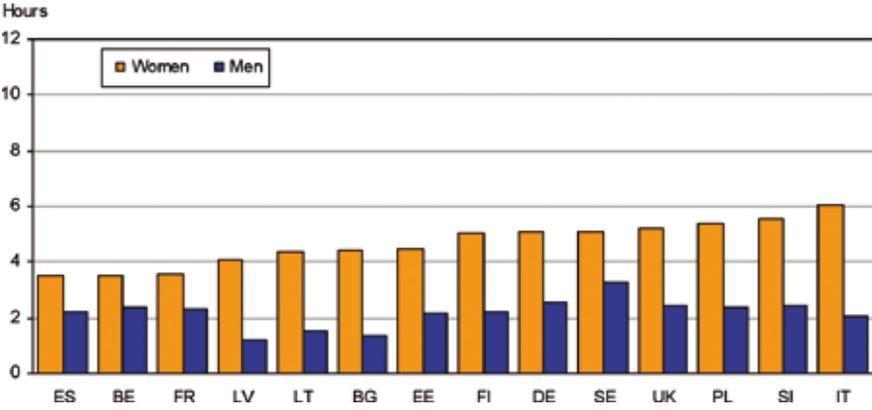
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–39.

Figure 4.6.8 Time spent on paid work, working couples with children 0–6 years old



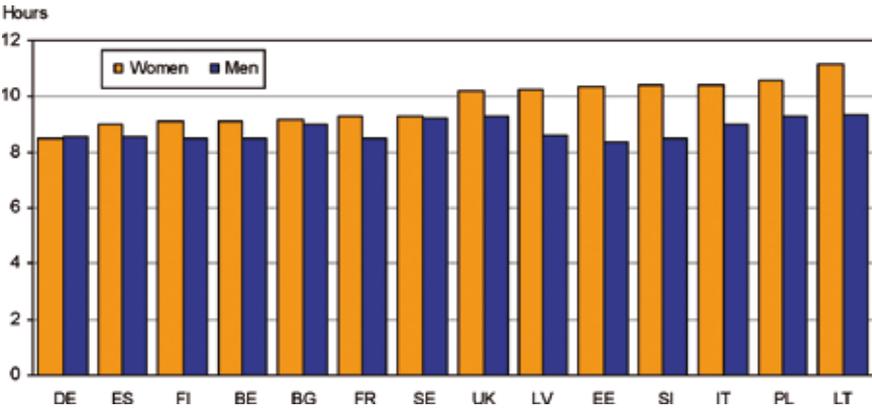
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–39.

Figure 4.6.9 Time spent on domestic work, working couples with children 0–6 years old



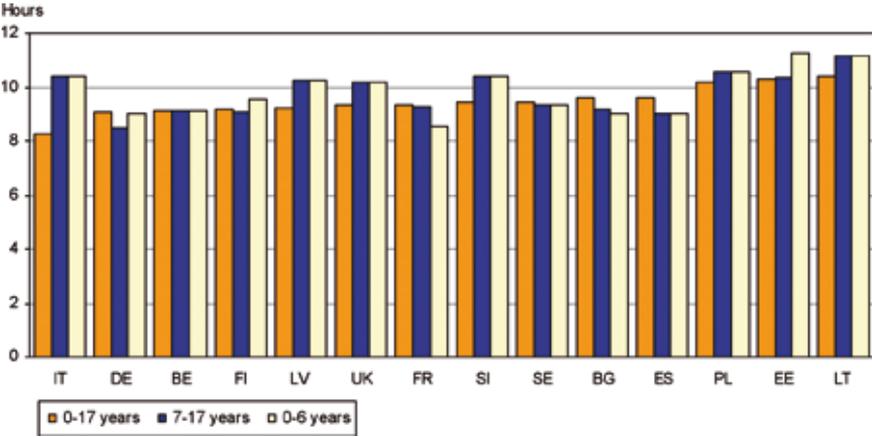
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–39.

Figure 4.6.10 Total “tied time”, working couples with children 7–17 years old



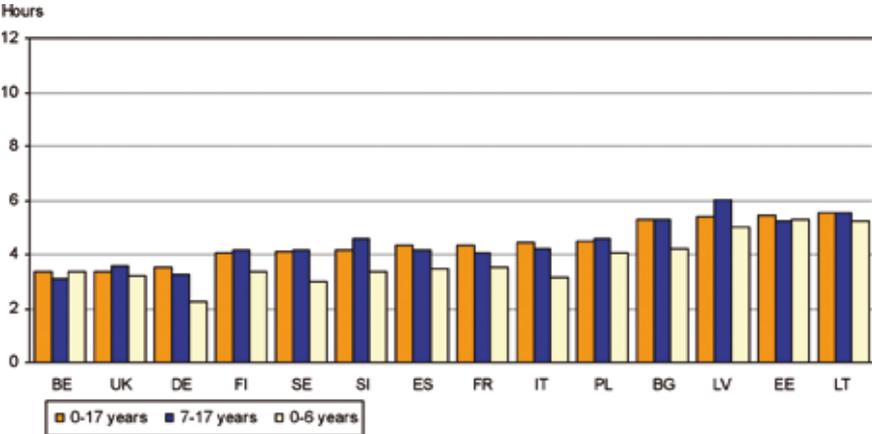
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–39.

Figure 4.6.11 Total “tied time”, working single mothers with children 0–17 years old, working married/cohabiting mothers with children 0–6 years old and 7–17 years old



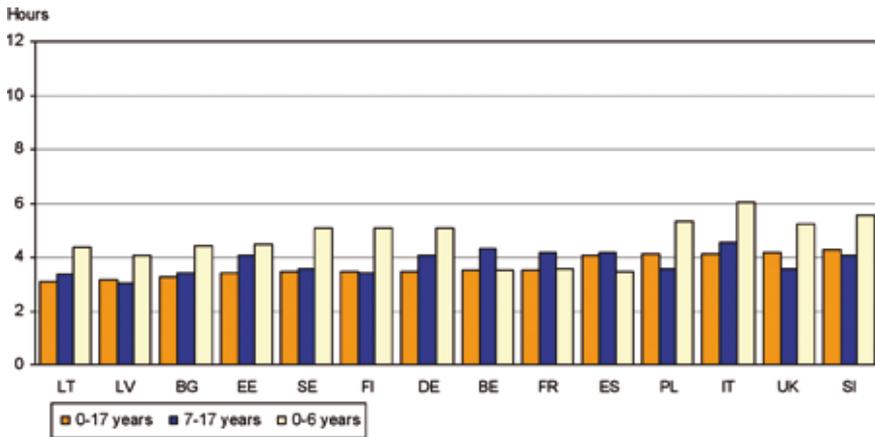
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–41.

Figure 4.6.12 Time spent on paid work, working single mothers with children 0–17 years old, working married/cohabiting mothers with children 0–6 years old and 7–17 years old



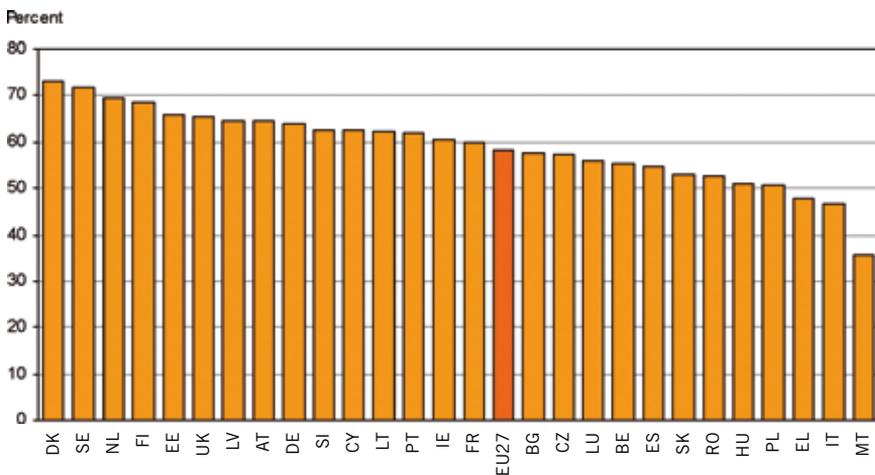
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–41.

Figure 4.6.13 Time spent on domestic work, working single mothers with children 0–17 years old, working married/cohabiting mothers with children 0–6 years old and 7–17 years old



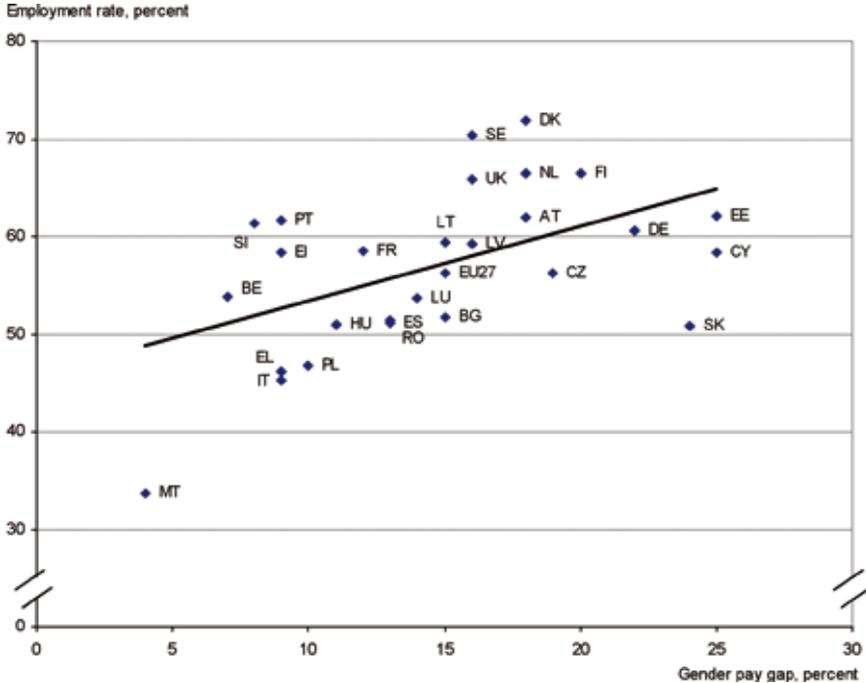
Source: Council of European Union 16595/08 p, 38–41.

Figure 4.6.14 Employment rate, women, 15–64 years old, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Figure 4.6.15 Women's employment rate and gender pay gap, 2005



Source: Employment – Eurostat EU-LFS; gender wage gap Eurostat, ECHP.

Figure 4.7.1 The cluster of Member States with higher/lower female representation in the single/lower houses of the national/federal parliaments 1999, 2003 and 2008

Category/Year	1999	2003	2008
More than 40 %	Sweden 42.70	Sweden 45.0	Sweden 47
			Finland 41
			Netherlands 41
More than 30 %	Denmark 37.40	Denmark 38.0	Denmark 38
	Finland 37.00	Finland 37.0	Belgium 37
	Netherlands 36.00	Netherlands 35.0	Spain 35
	Germany 30.90	Belgium 33.9	Germany 33
		Germany 32.3	Austria 31
		Austria 32.0	
More than 20 %	Austria 27.90	Spain 28.2	Portugal 29
	Belgium 23.30		Luxembourg 25
	Spain 22.00		Lithuania 23
			Bulgaria 22
			Estonia 21
			Italy 21
			Latvia 21
			Poland 20
More than 10 %	United Kingdom 18.40	Portugal 19.6	France 19
	Portugal 17.40	United Kingdom 18.0	Slovakia 19
	Luxembourg 16.70	Cyprus 16.1	United Kingdom 19
	Ireland 12.00	Ireland 13.2	Cyprus 16
	Italy 11.10	France 12.3	Czech Republic 16
	France 10.90		Greece 16
			Ireland 13
			Slovenia 13
		Hungary 11	
		Romania 10	
0–10 %	Greece 6.60	Italy 9.6	Malta 9
	Cyprus 5.35	Greece 9.0	
All countries	22.2 %	25.3 %	24.0 %

Source for 1992–1995 and 1999: Presidency report on “Women in the decision-making process” in the Member States and the European Institutions (11829/99). 1999.

Source for 2003: Women in decision-making processes. Conference. Syracuse. 12 September 2003. Update of elected indicators on women in political decision-making. 2003.

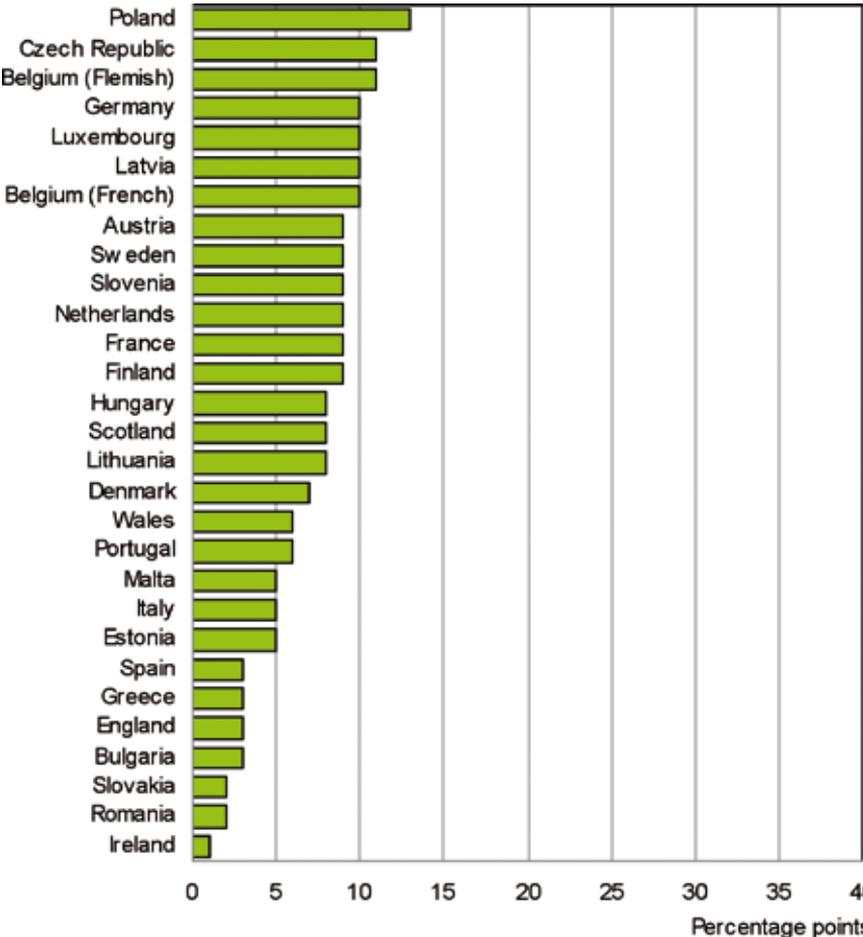
Source for 2008: European Commission. DG EMPL. Database on women and men in decision-making. 2009. Data collected between 26/05/2008–15/10/2008.

Figure 4.7.2 Portfolios of women ministers in Member State governments (%)

BEIS	Women ministers 1999	Women ministers 2003	Women ministers 2008
Basic functions	24	28	19.5
Economic functions	13	16	17.5
Infrastructure	14	21	23.5
Socio-cultural function	48	35	40.5

Source for 1999 and 2003: Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action (EC 9670/08 ADD 1) (Report prepared by the Slovenian Presidency, May 2008). Source for 2008: European Commission. DG EMPL. Database on women and men in decision-making. 2009. Data collected between 26/05/2008 and 15/10/2008.

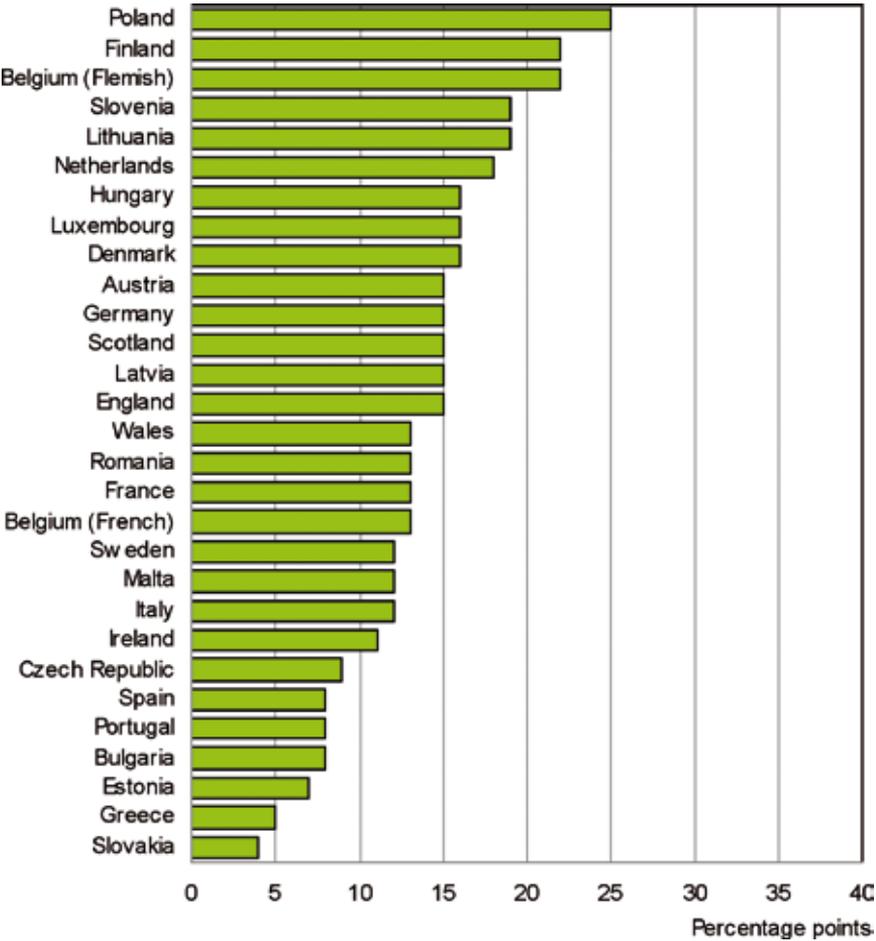
Figure 4.12.1 Difference between proportion of 11 year old girls and boys respectively who consider themselves "too fat"



No information from Cyprus. Information exists only for England, Scotland and Wales separately and for Belgium (French) and Belgium (Flemish) separately.

Source: *The Girl Child, Report by the Slovenian Presidency, 2008*

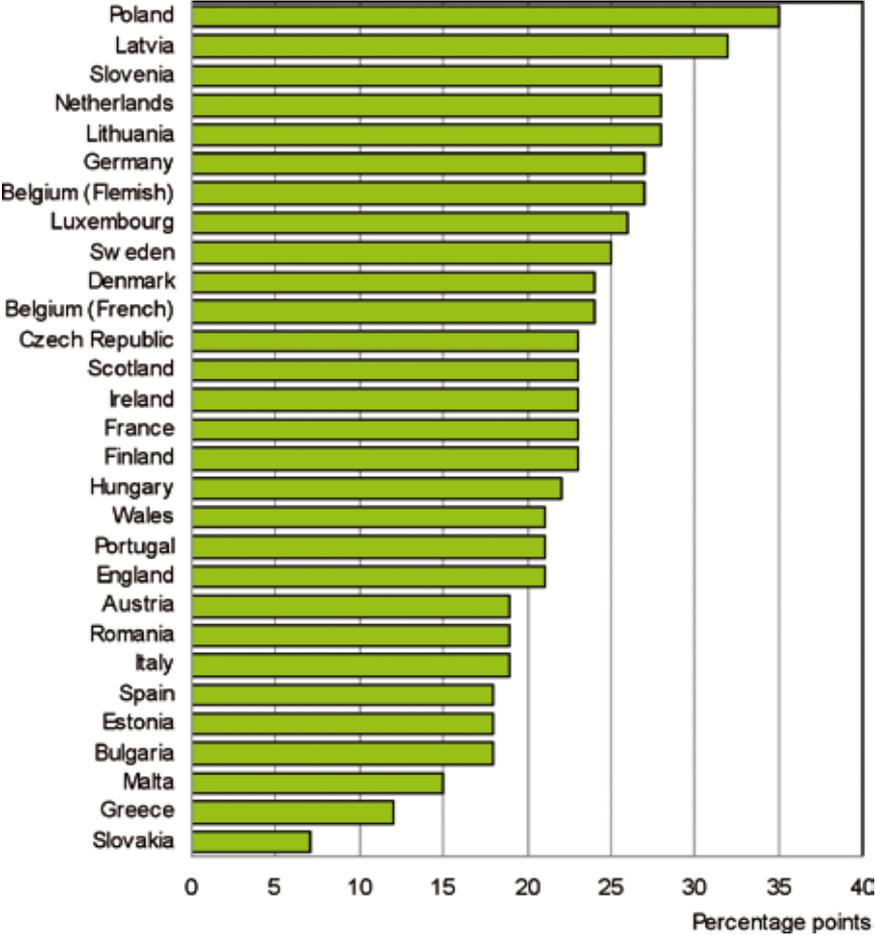
Figure 4.12.2 Difference between proportion of 13 year old girls and boys respectively who consider themselves "too fat"



No information from Cyprus. Information exists only for England, Scotland and Wales separately, and for Belgium (French) and Belgium (Flemish) separately.

Source: *The Girl Child, Report by the Slovenian Presidency, 2008*

Figure 4.12.3 Difference between proportion of 15 year old girls and boys respectively who consider themselves "too fat"



No information from Cyprus. Information exists only for England, Scotland and Wales separately, and for Belgium (French) and Belgium (Flemish) separately.

Source: *The Girl Child, Report by the Slovenian Presidency, 2008*

Table 4.12.1 Proportion of 15 year olds dissatisfied with their body weight

	2001/2002		2005/2006	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Austria	44.9	25.9	50	31
Bulgaria	–	–	36	18
Belgium (Fren.)	54.1	28.6	52	28
Belgium (Flem.)	54.8	25.3	51	24
Cyprus	–	–	–	–
Czech Republic	39.0	16.3	39	16
Denmark	48.2	22.8	44	20
Estonia	34.9	9.4	32	14
Finland	43.3	19.8	45	22
France	41.8	20.6	44	21
Germany	51.9	32.2	58	31
Greece	33.2	24.0	36	24
Hungary	41.2	21.1	40	18
Ireland	48.3	21.4	45	22
Italy	37.1	18.9	38	19
Latvia	38.8	10.6	43	11
Lithuania	42.5	9.0	40	12
Luxembourg	–	–	53	27
Malta	31.7	22.7	32	17
Netherlands	50.6	23.7	53	25
Poland	56.5	19.3	54	19
Portugal	48.0	24.1	47	26
Romania	–	–	33	14
Slovakia	–	–	17	10
Slovenia	59.9	24.4	54	26
Spain	49.0	27.8	45	27
Sweden	41.9	18.0	48	23
UK (England)	46.4	24.4	44	23
UK (Scotland)	52.3	20.6	48	25
UK (Wales)	52.0	26.5	47	26

Source: HBSC 2001/2002 in 9669/08. ADD 1. ANNEX; WHO (2008); in Statistics Sweden (2009b)

Table 4.12.2 Difference between 15 year old girls' and boys' results in mathematics and science. 2006, percentage points

	Mathematics	Science
Austria	-23	-8
Belgium	-7	-1
Czech Republic	-11	-5
Denmark	-10	-9
Finland	-12	3
France	-6	-3
Germany	-20	-7
Greece	-5	11
Hungary	-10	-6
Ireland	-11	0
Italy	-17	-3
Luxembourg	-17	-9
Netherlands	-13	-7
Poland	-9	-3
Portugal	-15	-5
Slovak Republic	-14	-6
Spain	-9	-4
Sweden	-5	-1
United Kingdom	-17	-10
Bulgaria	4	17
Estonia	-1	4
Latvia	-5	7
Lithuania	-2	9
Romania	-7	2
Slovenia	-5	8

No information from Cyprus or Malta.

Source: HBSC 2001/2002 in 9669/08. ADD 1. ANNEX; WHO (2008); in Statistics Sweden (2009b)

Table 4.12.3 The proportion of girl students in tertiary education in the field of science, mathematics and computing and in the field of teacher training and education science 2001 and 2006

	2001		2006	
	Science, mathematics. computing	Education	Science, mathematics. computing	Education
Austria	33.3	71.7	34	75
Bulgaria	55.1	76.9	49	68
Belgium	30.8	70.2	32	73
Cyprus	36.0	90.6	36	88
Czech Republic	24.0	71.7	33	75
Denmark	33.2	68.5	33	71
Estonia	38.9	87.6	39	90
EU 27	39.0	74.2	37	75
Finland	41.8	80.3	40	81
France	–	–	36	76
Germany	32.6	69.3	35	69
Greece	–	–	–	–
Hungary	31.7	72.3	31	73
Ireland	45.1	82.2	42	78
Italy	49.6	84.0	50	87
Latvia	38.8	83.3	31	85
Lithuania	42.0	79.2	34	78
Luxembourg	–	–	–	–
Malta	31.6	70.9	36	78
Netherlands	23.4	73.9	16	74
Poland	49.5	73.6	37	73
Portugal	49.9	81.3	47	26
Romania	59.9	50.9	54	75
Slovakia	31.9	73.8	36	75
Slovenia	30.8	80.3	33	80
Spain	37.2	76.0	34	78
Sweden	45.4	77.3	43	76
United Kingdom	40.0	70.7	37	74

No data available for France, Greece and Luxembourg in 2001, for Greece and Luxembourg in 2006.

Source: Eurostat (Statistics Sweden 2009b)

The official document adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 is called the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace (PfA). The PfA is an agenda for women's empowerment that reaffirms the fundamental principle whereby the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. As an agenda for action, the platform seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle.

This report *Beijing + 15: The Platform for Action and the European Union* is the third review of development at the EU-level in relation to the 12 critical areas of concern of the PfA, building on the follow-up by the EU in 2000 and on the report from the Luxembourg Presidency in 2005. The report is based on the Council Conclusions on the follow-up of the Beijing PfA since 2005 and on information provided by the Member States in their answers to the UNECE questionnaire sent out in January 2009. The report has been realised under the supervision of the Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality in Sweden and Director Marianne Laxén has been responsible for its compilation.