REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA ON

May 2014
Chapter One: Review of achievements and challenges since 1995

The Beijing Platform for Action, the conclusions of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the initial, second, third and fourth report constitute a legal, political and policy framework for planning, implementing and assessing the effect of measures and strategies to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and for developing and implementing policies to strengthen the role of women and promote de jure and de facto gender equality.

Slovenia has made significant progress in the development and implementation of gender equality policy since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action. Legislation, programmes and measures have been adopted which prohibit discrimination against women and promote the implementation of substantive gender equality in all areas, and various activities have been carried out to raise awareness and eliminate barriers to gender equality. The implementation of gender equality policy and results achieved have also been assessed, and this evaluation will provide a basis for further developing gender equality policy.

Key legislative achievements

Before the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted, the fundamental provisions on non-discrimination and gender equality were contained only in the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. Most legislation regulating various areas and aspects of life was gender neutral. The special protection of women was regulated in relation to maternity and parenting and retirement conditions. Awareness that a specific, general law on gender equality was needed and that legislation covering various areas had to define measures aimed to gender equality and prohibit sex- and gender-based discrimination in more specific terms increased after the Fourth World Conference on Women.

At the legislative level, the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act was passed in 2002 as an umbrella act determining common guidelines or bases for improving the status of women and creating equal opportunities of women and men in particular areas of social life. The legal basis for ensuring the equal treatment of persons in all areas of social life regardless of personal circumstances, including sex, was improved with the enactment of the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act in 2004. The two acts complement each other and provide a legal basis for the identification and prohibition of multiple and intersectional discrimination against women. The prohibition of sex- and gender-based discrimination applies to public and private sectors and to all areas of social life. In addition to the general act on gender equality, the prohibition of discrimination and guarantees of gender equality are regulated in detail in legislation on employment relationships, education, parental protection, insurance and elections.

In 2004, the National Assembly passed the Constitutional Act Amending Article 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, which added to the article guaranteeing a general and equal right to vote a new, a fourth paragraph authorising the legislator to determine by law measures to promote equal opportunities for women and men to stand as candidates in elections to state and local community authorities. In accordance with the constitutional provision, quotas for the lists of candidates were added to the Election of Slovenian Members to the European Parliament Act (2004), the Local Elections Act (2005) and the National Assembly Elections Act (2006).

One of the important legislative achievements was the adoption of the Family Violence Prevention Act in 2008. In the same year, a new Criminal Code entered into force defining family violence as a criminal offence for which the perpetrator can be sentenced to an imprisonment of up to five years.

Efforts were also dedicated to the prevention of trafficking in human beings. In 2004, amendments to the Criminal Code were adopted which defined the criminal offences of trafficking in human beings and exploitation through prostitution. In 2005, the Witness Protection Act was adopted, which regulates the conditions and procedures for the protection of witnesses and other persons in danger due to participation in a criminal procedure.
The Parental Protection and Family Benefit Act (2001) facilitated the reconciliation of professional and private life and the greater involvement of fathers in child care by giving fathers the individual and non-transferable right to paternity leave following childbirth. The act introduced the option of part-time work for one parent until a certain age of the child, depending on the number of children in the family.

In addition to legislation, the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2005–2013 also contributed to the implementation of gender equality policy in various areas. The resolution boosted gender equality policy – there was a greater awareness that achieving substantive gender equality and the empowerment of women is the duty of the entire society and that all branches of power (executive, legislative and judicial) and all government structures must take responsibility for implementing gender equality policy. The resolution identified six key areas for which general and special objectives and measures to achieve these objectives were defined.

Key achievements and challenges of gender equality policy

In the period from the adoption of the Beijing Declaration, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Conclusions of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly until today, significant progress has been made in many areas. The assessment of the situation is more systematic; the legal and programme measures developed and adopted are more comprehensive, and various activities are carried out and continuously upgraded, which is reflected in the following:

- better application of the strategy for achieving gender equality, in which special measures to promote gender equality are systematically complemented by gender mainstreaming in all policy areas;
- the use of special measures to eliminate the effects of structural and historical inequalities between women and men and to accelerate the achievement of substantive gender equality, particularly in political decision-making;
- enhanced awareness of gender equality and the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex and gender or any other personal circumstance;
- the improved collection and analysis of relevant statistical and other data disaggregated by sex, which facilitates monitoring, measuring effectiveness and the evaluation of measures adopted, the identification of the need for new measures and strengthened support from relevant studies and research projects;
- strengthened development and implementation of initiatives and measures to promote a balanced division of family obligations between women and men, including measures that particularly focus on encouraging employed fathers to take paternity and parental leave and measures focused on encouraging employers to establish and develop family-friendly practices to facilitate the reconciliation of family and professional obligations;
- a more comprehensive response to all forms of violence against women and trafficking in human beings, including better protection of victims, the provision of assistance and support to victims and a wide range of information and awareness-raising activities, training and education of relevant actors, and improving cooperation and coordination among all relevant actors, including non-governmental organisations, which play an invaluable role in preventing violence against women and girls.

Significant progress has been made particularly with regard to a more balanced gender representation in political decision-making positions, combating violence against women and an easier reconciliation of professional and private life.

Women in political decision-making positions

As indicated in the chapter on key legislative achievements, in 2004 the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia was amended to include a provision on the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men standing as candidates in elections by introducing special measures to several acts. A provision on the minimum share of representation of women and men on the lists of candidates and the rule on placing of candidates on the lists were added to the Election of Slovenian Members to the European Parliament Act, the Local Elections Act and the National Assembly Elections Act.
The introduction of special measures and activities to raise awareness of the importance of participation of men and women in political decision-making contributed to the increase in the share of women in elected political positions.

In the 1992 National Assembly elections, 13.3% of women were elected; in the 1996 elections merely 7.8%; in the 2000 elections, the share of women rose to 13.3% again, and the share remained the same in the elections of 2004 and 2008. A significant increase was achieved in the early elections of 2011, when 32.2% of women were elected. Although the regulatory norm or special measure determining the minimum share of women and men on the lists of candidates was already in force in 2008, this did not result in the greater electability of women. The main reason for this is that political parties do not include women on the lists of candidates in districts where there is greater possibility of them being elected, which was also confirmed by the findings of the analysis of the National Assembly elections. The 2011 elections showed that women are willing to enter politics and that quotas produce results, provided, of course, that political parties are not being calculating and entering women on lists in electoral districts where they have no chance of being elected. The increase in the share of women to 32.2% is to be attributed mainly to two new parliamentary parties which were not in a position to assess in advance their electability in individual electoral districts. Even though the introduction of quotas did not immediately result in a higher share of women in the parliament, it contributed significantly to the increased share of women on the lists of candidates and better visibility and recognisability of women in politics as well as to enhanced awareness of the need for gender balanced representation in political decision-making. Awareness of how essential it is that women participate in political decision-making has also been raised by numerous discussions and consultations.

The introduction of special measures also contributed to the increase in the share of women in city and municipal councils. In the 1994 local elections, 10.7% of councillors elected to city and municipal councils were women, in 1998 11.7%, in 2002 13.1%; in 2006 (after the introduction of quotas) the share of women councillors rose to 22%, and in the last elections in 2010, 23.3% of women councillors were elected.

In the first elections of Slovenian members to the European Parliament in 2004, women comprised 41.1% of candidates. Three of the seven elected Slovenian members, or 42.8%, were women. In the elections for the 2009–2014 term, balanced representation was achieved, with four women and four men being elected. Its 50 per cent representation places Slovenia significantly above the EU average in women's representation in the European Parliament.

**Violence against women**

Significant progress has been made in combating violence against women in the last 20 years.

Attention was first drawn to the problem of violence against women in the late 1980s, when Slovenia acquired its first non-governmental organisation in this field. The first shelter for women and children who were victims of violence opened in 1996. Today, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities co-finances twenty shelters or safe houses and maternity homes, which provide 445 beds.

Initially, most activities to combat violence against women were directed at identification and awareness raising and the development of assistance programmes. An important and invaluable role was played by non-governmental organisations operating in this field. Many projects were implemented and consultations organised, examples of good practice in other countries were presented and media campaigns carried out. One of the first widely known media campaigns was titled "What is wrong, girl?". In 2001, an inter-ministerial working group was established to serve as an advisory body on combating trafficking in human beings. The first non-governmental organisation in this field began operations in the same year.

In recent years, efforts have primarily been directed at passing appropriate legislation. In 2008, several pieces of legislation were passed, such as the *Family Violence Prevention Act*, which formed the basis for the *Resolution on the National Programme for Family Violence Prevention 2009–2014*, a new *Criminal Code*, which defined family violence as a criminal offence, and various implementing

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1 Ženski lobi Slovenije (Women's Lobby of Slovenia), Analiza volitev v Državni zbor, 2011.
Reconciliation of professional and private life
High employment for both women and men is characteristic of Slovenia. According to data for 2012, employment is highest in the 25–49 age group (84.4%), both for women (81.8%) and men (86.8%). It also exceeds the EU average by 3.3 percentage points for men and 10.4 percentage points for women. People in this age group are usually starting a family, so whether they have children or not is an important factor in relation to the employment rate, as the possibility of reconciling professional and family obligations is a key factor affecting the employment of parents, particularly women. The employment rate for people in this age group who have no children is 80% for women and 81.1% for men. For men with one child under 6 years of age the employment rate is 91%, for women 78.6%; for men with two children it is 94.6% and for women 82.8%; and for men with three children or more it is 92.9% and for women 76.8%.

Women’s high employment rate is due to good regulation of employment, parental leave, child care, primary schooling, etc., which enables parents, particularly women, to reconcile professional and family life. Slovenia is one of the rare countries where the impact of parenthood on the employment rate is limited.

Although the employment rate of women in Slovenia is more or less equal to that of men, and women contribute to family budgets, the division of unpaid work between partners is still very unequal. Women do considerably more housework and child care than men. This is also reflected in the exercise of rights arising from parental protection insurance. Although both parents have the right to parental leave and part-time work due to a child, this right is mostly exercised by women. Therefore, activities in recent years have focused on changes aimed to encourage parents to share child-care obligations more equally and fathers to exercise their parental rights.

The Parental Protection and Family Benefit Act, passed in 2001, introduced some novelties regarding parental leave. The 260-day child nursing and care leave became the right of both parents, not only mothers. This means that parents must agree on how to exercise this right, and it is no longer solely the mother who decides. Ninety-day paternal leave was introduced. For 15 days of the leave, fathers receive full wage compensation, while for the remaining 75 days, the state guarantees the payment of minimum wage social security contributions. The act also introduced the option of part-time work for one parent until a certain age of the child, depending on the number of children in the family.

In addition to this legislation, studies were conducted on the reconciliation of family and professional obligations, fatherhood, gender equality in family life and partnerships, etc., and awareness-raising campaigns were carried out to encourage active fatherhood and overcome the stereotyping of the roles of women and men in society. The media campaign “Daddy, get active!” ran for several years and included radio and TV commercials, a documentary, ‘daddy runs’, information material, etc.
All of these efforts resulted in more fathers taking some of the child-nursing and care leave and paternal leave. While less than 1% of fathers took some of the child-nursing and care leave in 2001, the share was approximately 8% in 2012 (most recent data). The 15-day paternal leave is taken by the majority of fathers entitled to it, while approximately 20% of fathers take some of the remaining 75 days.

Despite these efforts, progress in some areas has not been as we wished. Among these are the status of women in decision-making positions in the economy and use of gender mainstreaming.

Women in decision-making positions in the economy

Although the employment rate of women is more or less equal to that of men, and on average their education is at a higher level, this is not reflected in decision-making positions in the economy. The twenty largest listed companies have only 10% of chairwomen and 20% of female management board members, and 24% of female non-executive and 19% of female executive directors (data for 2013). Support measures and programmes, and consultations and research carried out in recent years have helped to identify the problem; however, they have not resulted in raising the percentage of women in decision-making positions in the economy. Therefore, the Government is considering the adoption of more binding measures.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a challenge that continues to be a priority. The first gender mainstreaming activities at the government level in Slovenia started in 1997 with a pilot project which involved several ministries. Within the project, state employees were educated on gender equality policy and attended training aimed at promoting understanding of, and the need for, gender mainstreaming in all policies. Later, similar training courses were organised for state officials. Slovenia made the commitment to implement gender mainstreaming by passing the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act, which in Article 11 requires ministries to take account of the gender equality principle when preparing regulations and other measures important for creating and maintaining equal opportunities. The act also requires that equal opportunities coordinators be appointed at ministries and some self-governing local communities, thus creating the initial condition for gender mainstreaming in all policies and at all levels. In subsequent years, particular attention was given to educating and training public employees, developing methods and tools and preparing information material and web tools.

In the 2009–2012 period, the Government Office for Equal Opportunities carried out the following two projects under the PROGRESS Programme of the European Commission: Gender Mainstreaming – Strategy and Making Gender Mainstreaming Work. Within the Making Gender Mainstreaming Work project, a manual The Road to Gender Equality: Effective Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming into Policies was issued, which gives an overview of the situation in gender mainstreaming in all policies, covers the methods and techniques of gender mainstreaming and provides guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the areas of social protection, social inclusion and employment. The manual was sent to all major government actors and was used as educational material at training seminars. A training module was developed within this project and applied in the subsequent project Gender Mainstreaming – Strategy; the module was used in gender mainstreaming training organised at different ministries; its content was adjusted to their respective policies and competencies. As part of this project, training on gender mainstreaming in the budget process was carried out and two tools were designed: a list of questions for gender mainstreaming in the budget process and a web tool for gender mainstreaming.

Despite all the above-mentioned activities, the implementation of gender mainstreaming is still very limited. One of the next steps to enhance it is the establishment of a gender mainstreaming steering group. The proposal for the Equality of Women and Men Act, which is being discussed in the National Assembly, stipulates in Article 24 that the minister responsible for the equality of women and men must establish a steering group for gender mainstreaming to ensure effective gender mainstreaming in policies.

In addition to the enhanced efforts to promote the use of gender mainstreaming, the use of other strategies for achieving gender equality will have to be strengthened, in particular the use of special measures for promoting gender equality focused on specific gender inequality issues and concerns.
Financial resources

Financial resources for implementing gender equality policy are ensured within the budget, as well as through successful applications to tenders issued by the European Commission and within the financial mechanisms of the EU and other financial mechanisms, such as the Norwegian Financial Mechanism. In addition to the earmarked budget funds intended for combating family violence and violence against women, reconciling professional and private or family life, preventing trafficking in human beings, co-financing projects of non-governmental organisations in the field of gender equality and similar, activities for the implementation of gender equality are also financed within the regular work and programmes of ministries.

Non-governmental organisations

Civil society organisations are important partners in the implementation of different projects: they actively participate in ensuring equality of opportunities for women and men by launching initiatives, reacting to legislative proposals and measures, monitoring the situation, reporting on the status of women and men in Slovenia, highlighting any difficulties met by women in the enjoyment of their guaranteed rights, etc. The Council for the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment is an advisory body of the Government in the area of non-discrimination and equal treatment. In addition to representatives of ministries, the Council includes representatives of non-governmental organisations.

Cooperation with non-governmental organisations on gender equality is to be strengthened in the future, as the proposal for the Equality of Women and Men Act, which is being discussed in the National Assembly, provides for the establishment of an expert council for the equality of women and men. The expert council is to be an expert and advisory body for the equality of women and men established by the minister responsible for the equality of women and men. It will be composed of representatives of ministries and non-governmental organisations in the field of gender equality and experts in this field. The council will monitor and assess progress in achieving substantive gender equality, and submit motions, proposals and recommendations.

Chapter Two: Progress made since 2009 in critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action

A. Women and poverty

In 2012, the risk-of-poverty rate was 13.2% (account being taken of income in cash and in kind) and was 1.9 percentage points higher for women than men. Compared with 2009, it increased by 1.2 percentage points - by 1.6 percentage points for women and 2.6 for men. The risk-of-poverty rate is significantly higher for older women (over 65 years of age); in 2012 it was 24.3%, twice the rate of men in the same age group (11.0%). With regard to the type of household, single-member households are in the worst position – in 2012 their risk-of-poverty rate was 37.5%. It was slightly higher for women (40.1%) than men (34.2%). Compared with 2009, the risk-of-poverty rate for single-member households decreased by 5.8 percentage points – by 7.2 percentage points for women and by 1.7 for men. Among households facing poverty risk higher than the Slovenian average are single-parent families with at least one dependent child (25.8%), of which most are single-mother families. There is also a high risk of poverty among the unemployed (43.8% for women and 44.8% for men) and tenants (31.8% for women and 27.6% for men). In the 2008–2011 period, the at-risk-of-poverty rate increased for all these groups.3

Many legislative amendments have been adopted in recent years with regard to social security system, which is extremely important in terms of social security and the social inclusion of women. On 1 January 2012, two acts became applicable: the Exercise of Rights to Public Funds Act and the

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2 Expressed as a percentage of persons living in households with net income equivalent below the poverty risk threshold. Data on the risk-of-poverty rate regarding income in cash and in kind.

3 Source: Si-stat, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.
**Financial Social Assistance Act.** The two acts introduced significant changes to the legislation on social assistance, family benefits and subsidies and the system of rights to public funds. A central record of rights to public funds was set up and information systems integrated. According to the new arrangements, all rights to public funds are decided on at a single point (social work centre); the elements affecting the decision on social rights were harmonised and the criteria for entitlement to some social rights were changed. A key new element in granting financial social assistance is means testing. The data on disbursed financial social assistance show that in the past ten years, just over 50,000 people have applied. In June 2011, 51,591 financial social assistance payments were made, of which 49.43% were received by women.

In accordance with Slovenia's efforts to consolidate public finances, intervention measures were adopted which affected rights to public funds, particularly the method of adjusting transfers to individuals and households, which are adjusted pursuant to the Act Regulating Adjustments of Transfers to Individuals and Households in the Republic of Slovenia will not be adjusted until 31 December 2014, with the exception of the base minimum income amount.

In 2013, the Resolution on the National Social Assistance Programme 2013–2020 was adopted, which includes among its key objectives the reduction of the risk of poverty and increasing the social inclusion of socially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups for 40,000 persons by 2020.

**B. Education and training of women**

Primary education is compulsory in Slovenia. In the 2012/2013 school year, 161,051 pupils were enrolled in primary schools, of whom 78,409 (48.7%) were girls. In the same school year, 78,208 students were enrolled in secondary schools, of whom 37,887 (48.4%) were girls. Women enter tertiary education more often than men, and are also more successful academically. No substantial changes have been noted regarding the choice of subjects in recent years. As in previous years, female students have continued to prevail in higher vocational colleges, higher education institutions and universities offering programmes of health care, social work and education. A change was recorded in subjects in the areas of science, mathematics and computer science, where the share of female students increased by almost 10 percentage points in the 2004–2011 period.

Various activities were carried out with a view to reducing gender-based segregation in secondary and higher vocational education programmes and in curricular and extra-curricular activities. In 2009, one school centre carried out a project and prepared information on the labour market and gender structure and held discussions on gender and the professions with third-year students; the Faculty of Education prepared a professional training programme, Equal Gender Opportunities, which also included various active and targeted methods of encouraging girls and boys to enrol equally in secondary (vocational) programmes and tertiary programmes and to participate equally in curricular and extra-curricular activities. A Researchers’ Night was organised with a view to acquainting young people with science and the profession of science and promoting enrolment in post-graduate courses.

Various projects to include Roma children in pre-school, and primary and secondary education have been carried out in recent years: Roma assistants have been trained to help children overcome emotional and linguistic barriers upon entering kindergarten or school; school project teams have been established and training organised; a handbook for professionals in education and teaching material and didactic tools have been prepared.

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopts a programme of adult education every year. The main aim of the National Programme of Adult Education for 2013 is to improve general education, raise the level of education, increase employment opportunities and improve the possibilities of learning and participating in education for the adult population. The Programme notes that in order to attain a target 15 per cent of the adult participation in life-long learning by 2020, appropriate attention is to be paid to obstacles such as poor motivation and lack of educational institutions to assist women and men to reconcile family and professional obligations and learning.

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4 Source: Si-stat, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.
C. Women and health

In Slovenia, every one has equal access to health care on the basis of compulsory health insurance in accordance with the Health Care and Health Insurance Act. Compulsory health insurance guarantees free health-care services to women in relation to advice on family planning, contraception, pregnancy and childbirth, and not more than 15 per cent participation of insured persons for services related to the diagnosis and treatment of reduced fertility, artificial insemination, sterilisation and abortion.

In Slovenia, reproductive health care is organised at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Women are cared for by specialists in gynaecology at the primary level. According to the most recent data (2011), one gynaecologist attends 6,797 women, which means that, given the set criteria, 95.6% of women have access to a gynaecologist.

Good accessibility to gynaecologists at the primary level also means that women in all age groups have good access to contraception. The legal abortion rate also continues to decline in all age groups. Sex education in primary and secondary schools and awareness-raising activities play an important role in this regard.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, accounting for one fifth of all cancers (20.1%). Therefore, it is extremely important that the Breast Screening Programme (DORA) was launched in 2008 to complement the National Cervical Screening Program (ZORA). This Programme focuses on two objectives: 80 per cent inclusion of women aged between 50 and 69 in the organised programme and a 30 per cent reduction in the breast cancer mortality rate in the population participating in the programme.5

In 2011, the Ministry of Health issued the publication Health Inequalities in Slovenia presenting the health condition of Slovenian population in relation to social and economic factors, including data disaggregated by sex. In June 2013, the Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Slovenia and the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana held a conference Social Aspects of Health Inequalities of Women in cooperation with the World Health Organisation. Based on the findings presented at this scientific consultation, proposals aimed at reducing inequalities were drafted, including the need to monitor health inequalities systematically in the future and the requirement that in drafting new health policy measures their potential impact on widening the health inequality gap for women be considered.

D. Violence against women

Various normative measures have been taken in recent years to combat violence against women, which improve systemic regulation for the prevention of violence against women. In 2008, the Family Violence Prevention Act was passed. It defined various types of family violence and determined the role, tasks, network and cooperation of the different state authorities and non-governmental organisations in dealing with family violence; it also defined measures to protect victims of family violence. Four implementing regulations were also adopted which determine the cooperation and operation of different authorities or institutions (social work centres, police, healthcare institutions, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations in the field of combating violence against women) in detecting, preventing and other aspects of effectively addressing family violence. In addition, various instructions and guidelines for the operation of institutions engaged in combating family violence were prepared.

In 2009, the Resolution on the National Programme of Family Violence Prevention 2009–2014 was adopted, which laid down objectives, measures and key bodies responsible for implementing policies for the prevention and reduction of family violence. Specific tasks and activities to achieve the objectives have been defined in biannual action plans.

In the period from 2008 to 2011, the first national survey on violence in private life and partnerships, *The Extent and Responsiveness to Violence in the Domestic Sphere and in Partnerships*, was carried out in Slovenia. It was co-funded by the Office for Equal Opportunities, the Ministry of the Interior/Police and the Slovenian Research Agency. The survey consisted of two parts. The first part consisted of empirical research on violence in the domestic sphere and in partnerships, while the second part was an analysis of the effects of enacted and amended legislation on the work of institutions in dealing with family violence.

Various education and training courses and awareness-raising and information campaigns on the prevention of violence against women and family violence have been carried out in recent years. One of more widely known was the campaign for the prevention of violence against women *Do you hear?* carried out by the Ministry of the Interior/Police in cooperation with non-governmental organisations. The campaign drew attention to the unacceptability of violence, encouraged victims to rapidly seek help and others not to turn a blind eye when alerted to this problem in their environment and to play an active role in the fight against violence. It also focused on motivating perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions. The Government Office for Equal Opportunities has primarily tackled until less addressed issues in the prevention and elimination of violence against girls and women. In 2008, it carried out a study and organised a discussion on violence against people with disabilities. In 2010, it organised a discussion on dating violence, *Just this once*, and prepared documents to raise awareness on this issue. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities also plays an important role in education and raising awareness. In 2010, two seminars were held on preventing family violence for expert staff working at social work centres, safe houses, maternity homes and emergency shelters and for regional coordinators. The emphasis was on work with victims and violence perpetrators. In 2011, two seminars were held on preventing family violence, and one dedicated to preventing violence against the elderly. The Ministry issued various information leaflets, one for persons who have experienced violence, one concerning restraining orders and another with information for perpetrators. These were translated into several languages, including Romani.

In recent years, capacities to shelter victims of family violence have been increased. In 2012, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities co-funded the programmes of 20 safe houses, shelters, refuges and maternity homes, providing approximately 445 beds. One safe house is adapted to accommodate persons with disabilities, and one crisis centre to accommodate elderly people.

Numerous education and training courses related to trafficking in human beings have been organised for public employees and other target groups that deal with this issue in their work. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of the Interior finance programmes for the care of trafficking victims carried out by two non-governmental organisations.

Cooperation with non-governmental organisations in combating violence against women and trafficking in human beings is good and of great importance. Non-governmental organisations carry out numerous projects and education and training courses, and play an important role in raising public awareness of these issues.

On 8 September 2011, the Republic of Slovenia signed the *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*, adopted within the framework of the Council of Europe on 7 April 2011. Preparations for its ratification are underway.

**E. Women and armed conflict**

Facilitating an active role for women in ensuring international peace and security is a priority of Slovenia’s foreign-policy strategy. With a view to enhancing the participation of Slovenia in international operations and missions, the Government adopted, on 12 November 2009, the *Strategy for Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in International Operations and Missions*, which defines a

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6 Social work centres employ expert staff/ coordinators to provide professional assistance to violence victims. There are currently 12 coordinators.
framework for taking decisions on participation and identifies a general range of capacities for its implementation. The Strategy places special emphasis on providing equal opportunities to women and men for participation in international operations and missions at all levels. It also determines the preparation of a national plan to enhance women's role in matters of peace and security, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. The Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security was adopted for the 2010–2015 period with the following objectives:

– gender mainstreaming in policies for conflict prevention and resolution and decision-making and implementation processes, and strengthening the role of local women in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction;
– increased participation of women in international operations, missions and peace-building;
– prevention of sexual violence against girls and women and their protection during armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations.

The Action Plan contains political, operational and staffing commitments undertaken by the Government to work towards the stated objectives. It also includes international and national commitments, and identifies competences and methods of evaluating the effectiveness of implementation of policies and measures in achieving the objectives.

F. Women and the economy

High labour force participation for both women and men is characteristic of Slovenia. In recent years, during the economic and financial crisis, a slight fall in the labour force participation rate and a rise in unemployment have been noted. In 2012, the labour force participation rate for persons between 20 and 64 years of age was 68.3% (64.6% for women and 71.8% for men). The highest labour force participation rate has been recorded in the 25–49 age group for both men and women (in 2012 it was 86.8% for men and 81.8% for women). In comparison with 2009, the labour force participation rate fell by 3.3 percentage points for women and 3.8 for men.\(^7\)

The structure of the active working population by employment status shows that persons in paid employment comprise by far the greatest share. In 2012 (second quarter), the majority of active working women were employed (86.6%), followed by self-employed (7.9%) and unpaid family workers (5.5%). A similar distribution was seen among men, where 81.6% were employed, 15.8% were self-employed and 2.6% were unpaid family workers.\(^8\)

The majority of the active working population are people in full-time employment. In 2012, the share of part-time employed women and men stood at 12.4% and 8.9%, respectively. In recent years, a slight upward trend has been recorded in the part-time work of women and a slight downward trend in the part-time work of men.\(^9\)

The share of women in the highest-ranking and best-paid jobs (senior officials, managers and legislators) is lower than that of men, even though on average women attain a higher level of education than men. In 2012, the share of women in these positions was 39.6%. As regards occupations, in 2012 the share of women exceeded that of men among specialists (61.5%), officials (56.2%), services and sales staff (61.9%), in technical and administrative services (51.6%) and among unskilled workers (56.9%); the lowest share of women was recorded in craft and related trades (9.6%).\(^10\)

In 2012, 29,832 people with disabilities were among the active working population, of whom 46.5% were women.\(^11\)

\(^7\) Source: Si-stat, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.
\(^8\) Source: Si-stat, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.
The 2011 data show that the average gross salary of women was 4.6 percentage points below that of men. The gap was widest among the tertiary educated, where women earned an average 81.32% of men's salary.¹²

Unemployment has increased in recent years, during the economic and financial crisis. In 2012, the surveyed unemployment rate was 8.2%, 2.6 percentage points higher than in 2007. It is slightly higher for women (8.8%) than men (7.7%). In comparison with 2009, the unemployment rate increased by 3.3 percentage points for women and 2.1 for men. Likewise, the registered unemployment rate is higher for women than men. In 2012, it was 12.3% for women and 11.1% for men.

Measures to promote active forms of increasing employment and addressing women’s unemployment are included in strategic documents related to human resources development and active employment policy. Gender mainstreaming is reflected in various ways in the activities within the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development. In the promotion of entrepreneurship and flexibility, gender equality is ensured as regards the possibility of application and selection, and at all stages of implementation. In the promotion of employability of job seekers and the inactive, the overall objective at the level of operations is to include at least 55% of women. Instruments focused on gender equality are implemented under the development priority of equal opportunities and promotion of social inclusion.

Sexual harassment at work
Efforts to ensure appropriate working environments, without sexual or other forms of harassment and mobbing, are primarily focused on awareness raising and the effective implementation of legislation. In May 2009, the Government Office for Equal Opportunities organised a discussion Protecting the Dignity of Employees – from Legislation to Practice intended for employers, trade unions, lawyers, HR professionals and the professional and lay public (the police, justice, NGOs). Legislation and measures, good practice examples and the tasks and role of the Labour Inspectorate, trade unions and employers to ensure working environments free from sexual or other forms of harassment were presented in the discussion.

In 2009, the Government adopted the Decree on measures to protect the dignity of employees of state administration, which provides measures to prevent sexual and other harassment or mobbing and measures to be implemented in cases when sexual or other harassment or mobbing have already occurred. Each authority must designate a trained counsellor to provide assistance and information. To date, almost 500 participants have attended the training for counsellors, previously organised by the Office for Equal Opportunities and now by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

G. Women in power and political decision-making

The legislation laying down special measures – the minimal share of women and men on the lists of candidates for elections to the European Parliament, the National Assembly and municipal councils – has contributed to the increase in the share of women holding political decision-making positions.

A balanced representation of women and men has been achieved among Slovenian members of the European Parliament, with four women and four men MPs in the 2009–2014 term. Its 50 per cent women representation places Slovenia significantly above the EU average in women's representation in the European Parliament.

The share of women on the lists of candidates for 2011 early elections to the National Assembly was 43.15%. Twenty-nine women (32.22%) were elected. The increase in the share of women is mainly attributable to the large number of female deputies elected from the lists of two new parliamentary parties which were not in a position to assess in advance their electability in individual electoral districts. The recent elections show that women are willing to enter politics and that quotas produce results, provided, of course, that political parties are not being calculating and entering women on the lists in electoral districts where they have no chance of being elected. That the success of a candidate

depends on his or her presentation in an electoral district was shown by the analysis of the elections to the National Assembly conducted by the Women’s Lobby of Slovenia in 2011 and co-financed by the Government Office for Equal Opportunities.

When the quotas were introduced, the share of women candidates on the lists for councillors in the city and municipal councils also increased. In the 2010 elections, the share of women on the lists of candidates was 38%, and 23.26% of women councillors were elected, which is a slight increase over the 2006 election results, when the share of women on the lists of candidates was 32.28%, and 22% of elected councillors were women. In the 2006 and 2010 local elections, the statutory gender quotas on the lists of candidates were exceeded. Article 40 of the Local Elections Act requires 40 per cent representation of each sex on any list of candidates, but this will not take effect until the 2014 local elections; in the transitional period, 20 per cent representation was required in the 2006 elections and 30 per cent in 2010.

The Government Office for Equal Opportunities ordered an analysis of the 2006 and 2010 local elections with the aim of examining the effect of quotas on the balanced representation of women and men on the lists of candidates and on the electability and representation of women. The analysis of the 2010 local elections showed that the positive measures contributed to the increased representation of women on the lists of candidates. The alternate placing of women and men candidates on the lists of candidates proved less effective, given that the majority of political parties and other list proposers merely observed the minimum legal requirements on ranking order and placed women alternately in every third place on the list.

With the appointment of the new Government on 20 March 2013, the Republic of Slovenia acquired its first woman Prime Minister. One female minister (8.3%) and one female minister without portfolio hold ministerial positions (of a total 13). The Secretariat-General of the Government is headed by a woman and eight women hold secretary of state positions (33.3%).

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

In 2011, when a new Government took office, several organisational changes in line ministries were made. The Government Office for Equal Opportunities, which was the main government body for gender equality policy, was closed, and its tasks and staff were taken over by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. To be more specific, the tasks and staff were integrated into the Ministry’s International Affairs and European Coordination Service, renamed the Equal Opportunities and European Coordination Service. The Service is organisationally positioned under the Minister and the State Secretary, which enables its horizontal operations. With the change in government in 2013, the Ministry was renamed the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, as the area of equal opportunities was added. The closure of the Government Office for Equal Opportunities and the transfer of its tasks and staff to the Ministry did not give rise to any substantial changes in the performance of tasks in the area of gender equality. The implementation of de jure equality of men and women and de facto gender equality in all spheres of life has remained the basic principle of the work. The competencies and tasks of the Equal Opportunities Service are laid down in the instrument regulating internal organisation and job classification in the Ministry, in the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act and in the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act. The Equal Opportunities Service also carries out activities to promote gender mainstreaming in all Government policies, and designs and monitors the implementation of measures to eliminate inequalities based on sex and gender and socially constructed gender relationships in all spheres of life. In doing so, the Service cooperates with ministries and other public services, with international, domestic and foreign governmental and non-governmental organisations and other institutions, as well as with foreign and domestic experts.

The Equal Opportunities and European Coordination Service employs a head and five staff members specifically designated to work on gender equality (one of whom is currently working on a project and one is on a one-year sabbatical).

I. Human rights of women
Slovenia prepared its first national report for the Universal Periodic Review of human rights in 2009. Gender equality is a national priority in the area of human rights. The objectives in this field are to ensure the equal power, influence and responsibility of women and men, economic independence, the equal share of unpaid work, including care for children and older and other family members needing assistance, and the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

J. Women and the media

The share of women (self)employed in the cultural sector is relatively balanced with the share of men. However, no detailed analyses have been made in Slovenia to show in which occupations (artistic or non-artistic) and in which areas they work. Also, no detailed data are available on public funds granted to creators and projects and programmes that contribute to promoting gender equality.

In the media, the objective of the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2005–2013 was to reduce the stereotypical representation of women's and men's roles in media and advertising. The following two measures were to contribute to achieving this objective: support for programmes and projects encouraging media and advertising agencies to work towards eliminating stereotypes and a change in patterns regarding women's and men's roles and their image and values; and the greater effort of state authorities and authorities of self-governing local communities to implement gender mainstreaming in public information and awareness, where relevant.

K. Women and the environment

The Rural Development Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2007–2013 systematically encouraged equal opportunities and accessibility to all measures, regardless of sex, ethnic, religious or other affiliation. Within the rural development programme, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment emphasised gender equality in the preparation and implementation of measures. The principles of gender equality and equal opportunities were also included in the selection criteria for individual measures. Certain measures included positive actions focused on improving the status of women and increasing their participation.

L. The girl-child

On 10 October 2013, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted an updated Programme for Children and Youth 2006–2016, which states among its basic principles that all children are born free and equal with regard to their dignity and rights. Every one is entitled to all the rights and freedoms provided under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to equal opportunities, without discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, national, social or ethnic origin or other personal circumstance. Slovenia will give careful consideration to children with special needs (children with physical or mental development disorders), children in difficult social situations, children with behavioural disorders, Roma children, children in single-parent families and unaccompanied children. The programme includes all important areas of children's life, particularly those where unsolved or new problems facing children and youth in modern society are identified. It includes mutually complementary qualitative and quantitative objectives and development guidelines and activities essential to achieving the objectives.

Chapter Three: Data and statistics

Slovenia is a member of the EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. The group is responsible for planning the strategic monitoring of the Beijing Platform for Action, including the development of indicators. Since 1999, indicators for eleven critical areas have been developed.
Chapter Four: Priority areas

Although significant progress has been made in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women in many areas, particularly in legislation, barriers to substantive gender equality still exist. The changing of social and cultural patterns is a long-term process, and actual gender equality cannot be achieved through short-term measures.

In order to achieve actual gender equality, Slovenia has passed legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, requires actions to be taken to contribute to achieving gender equality and stipulates sanctions for violations. Efforts to ensure the best possible enforcement of this legislation will have to be strengthened and access to judicial protection improved. This will be facilitated by activities aimed at improving the awareness of women and men about their rights, which should also promote the exercise of these rights in practice.

Persistent gender differences require the continuous elimination of barriers to the full participation of women in the labour market and in political, public and economic/financial decision-making. It is also important to combat deeply-rooted and newly-emerging gender stereotypes that determine women's and men's roles in society and create a gender imbalance in paid and unpaid work. Therefore, we will continue to focus our efforts on creating conditions for a more balanced division of family obligations between women and men.

From early childhood and throughout the institutional education system, education for gender equality ensures the implementation of de facto equal opportunities for women and men, which are reflected in different areas of social life. Therefore, activities aimed at eliminating gender segregation will continue to play an important role. In addition to education for gender equality, which reduces the strict division between "female" and "male" occupations, the emphasis will be put on special incentives to direct students towards atypical "female" or "male" studies and occupations, thus reducing gender segregation in the labour market.

Awareness that violence against women and family violence are not private problems, but wider social problems constituting a barrier to achieving gender equality has increased in recent years. This is reflected in the legislation enacted and in the improvement of the systemic regulation of prevention of violence against women in the domestic environment and partnerships. Priority tasks include the effective implementation of international and domestic legal standards and the comprehensive implementation of the national programme for the elimination of family violence.

The introduction of special measures for balanced gender representation in political decision-making positions led to progress in this area. The effects of special measures need to be further monitored and evaluated and additional measures need to be considered and introduced.

One of the priority areas of gender equality policy is to increase the share of women in decision-making positions in the economy. Two projects are being implemented to promote and increase the representation of women in decision-making positions in the economy. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, in cooperation with the Women Managers' Section of the Managers' Association and the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, is carrying out the project "Include Every One". With support from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2012–2015, the Ministry is also carrying out the project "Balanced Power Relationships". The projects have the following objectives: to improve knowledge on managerial positions and on barriers to balanced gender representation in decision-making positions in the economy; to eliminate stereotypes of women and men in executive and managerial positions and promote the business aspect of gender equality in economic decision-making; and to encourage the private sector to enhance the participation and representation of women at all decision-making levels. As the special measure of quotas has proven effective in increasing the share of women in political decision-making when the softer, self-regulatory approaches did not work, special measures, such as quotas, should also be taken in this area to improve the situation.

The new Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men being prepared by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is a key document which will significantly contribute to addressing the abovementioned challenges in an accelerated and
The Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men determines the political and institutional framework of gender equality policy in Slovenia. Its purpose is to improve the status of women and ensure sustainable development in the implementation of gender equality. The Resolution will define objectives and measures in all relevant areas, which will be implemented through biannual action plans as before. The informed development of the new Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men will derive from the mapping of actual social conditions and the status of women and men in particular areas and the findings of the recent evaluation of the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2005–2013.

The development and improvement of the status of women and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action will also be affected by the current economic and financial crisis, which is a cause for concern. In a time of savings and the search for reserves at all levels, when financial savings and increases in taxes are at the forefront, the principle of gender equality too often loses importance. Therefore, monitoring and evaluating the impact of the economic crisis on women’s status will have to be enhanced, as well as the use of gender impact assessments when adopting and implementing legislation and measures with implications on creating equal opportunities for women and men.