

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2015

Statement of the Czech Republic

Working Session 5: "Tolerance and non-discrimination I; Equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of life"

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the EU. We would like to share with you some examples of good practices and measures taken by the Czech Government to promote equal participation of women and men in all spheres of life.

During the last few years, positive progress can be seen in the Czech Republic. In 2014, the position of minister for human rights and equal opportunities was renewed within the Czech Government followed by an increased focus on gender equality and personal commitment by the minister Jiří Dienstbier. Active promotion of gender equality is now one of the priorities of the Czech Government both on the domestic and foreign level, as embedded in the Government's Policy Statement and in the recently adopted Strategy for Human Rights and Democracy Promotion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In November 2014, the Czech Government approved the Strategy for Equality of Women and Men in the Czech Republic for 2014 – 2020. It is the first strategic document specifically aimed at gender equality adopted by the Czech Government. The Strategy covers 8 main strategic areas based on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and includes another 5 horizontal priorities such as gender stereotypes, men and gender equality and cooperation with NGOs and other stakeholder. Each of the strategic areas includes specific indicators in order to monitor and evaluate progress achieved. The Strategy also sets up so called Minimal standard for gender equality in state administration – a set of regular tasks to be fulfilled annually.

Based on the Strategy, an Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-based Violence for the Years 2015 – 2018 was approved in February 2015. The Action Plan includes 70 measures divided into 7 strategic areas, including Education and interdisciplinary cooperation, Support for victims, Data collection or Programmes for violent persons. The Action plan was created in cooperation with the Committee for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women associating experts from NGOs, relevant ministries and the academia.

In December 2014, the Gender Impact Assessment Methodology was developed in order to provide ministries with a practical tool for proper gender impact assessment. Follow-up workshops and trainings for state administration personnel have been organised in 2014 and continue to be organized this year. In July 2015, the Government recommended to all ministries to use the Gender Impact Assessment Methodology within the process of preparation of documents submitted to the Government. Furthermore, as of 1 January 2016 all ministries will have to secure gender-disaggregation of all statistical data relating to individuals.

By the end of 2015 we plan to undertake an awareness raising campaign funded by the Norway Grants focusing on gender equality and gender based violence prevention.

To sum up, the Czech Government has recently undertaken a number of specific and ambitious measures to improve gender equality in our country and to secure effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. However, a number of challenges still remain ahead of us. Women in the Czech Republic earn more than 20% less than men, continue to be under-represented in politics and

decision-making positions, face lack of child-care facilities and become victims of gender-based violence. The Czech Government is aware of these remaining gaps and plans to continue in its efforts to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women. We will also continue to focus on women facing multiple discrimination or disadvantages. Migrant women, women from minorities or women living outside urban areas deserve to live in a society based on gender equality and participate equally in public life.

In conclusion, let me reassure you of the Czech Republic's commitment to fulfil all its international obligations and commitments on protecting women's rights and promote gender equality, including the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. We recommend to the Participating States to adopt the proposed Addendum to the Action Plan which would strengthen the existing commitments and to enhance efforts to achieve gender equality and equal participation of women in their countries. We support the work of ODIHR and the Senior Adviser on Gender Issues in promoting the empowerment of women i.a. by developing a Compendium of Good Practices for Advancing Women's Political Participation. We stand ready to cooperate in these efforts.