



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

**OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Working Session 7
Tolerance and non-discrimination II**

Warsaw, 28 September - 9 October 2009

THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA'S PROGRESS IN APPLICATION OF OBLIGATIONS OF
THE OSCE COUNTRIES
ON HUMAN DIMENSION, RELATED TO WORKING THEME NO.7
(EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN)

In the interval between two HDIM meetings in Warsaw, the one last year and the one this year, significant developments occurred in the gender equality in the Republic of Serbia. When Gender Equality Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy became the Gender Equality Directorate, additional autonomy has been gained for this mechanism.

In February 2009 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the National Strategy for Improved Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality covering six subject areas as envisaged in the UN Beijing Platform: enhanced involvement of women in decision-making processes, better economic status of women, better health care of women and their increased influence to health care policy, achievement of gender equality in education, prevention and elimination of violence against women, and elimination of gender stereotypes in the media. On the basis of the Strategy the Action plan is developed, which needs to be adopted by the Government in order to begin its implementation.

The Draft Law on Gender Equality is developed, and adopted by the Government that forward it to the Parliament. The Draft Law has been accompanied with two studies: ex ante Evaluation of social impact of the Draft Law on Gender Equality and Comparative Analysis of the Draft Law with the relevant EU Directives and Regional Laws. When enacted, the Law will regulate the area of gender equality in a systemic way, and create conditions for equal opportunity policy to be implemented.

In the reporting period the Gender Equality Directorate organised several regional and national events, such as "Gender Equality and Association with the EU", "Cooperation of Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Equality", etc. The representatives of the Directorate participated in a number of regional and international events organised in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Athens, France, Canada, etc.

The Gender Equality Directorate has been involved in the following projects and programmes: Progress Programme, seminars organised by the European Training Foundation, a project focused to strengthening of gender components of the Employment Strategy in the context of the twinning programme, "Implementation of Gender Preconditions for Stability of Institutions of the System" Project, "Strengthening of the Civil Society in Development and Practice of Poverty Reduction Policy" Project, "Judiciary System Reform in Serbia" Project, and "Fight against Gender and Sex Based Violence".

The Directorate cooperated closely and actively with all relevant ministries of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, with gender mechanisms at provincial and local level, with the Gender Equality Parliament Committee, with the Ombudsman, relevant mechanisms in the region, as well as the international institutions such as UNIFEM, UNDP, Council of Europe, donor organisations and agencies, non-governmental organisations and civil society.

It was involved in other activities, including activities in the process of accession to EU, those related to implementation of the Security Council Resolution no 1325, reporting on CEDAW application, organisation of the seminars on gender equality for civil servants, consultations with regard to collection of gender disaggregated data, promotion campaigns on improved status of women, celebration of the days related to history of women's movement. It published various publications to familiarize public with the concept and basic terms on gender equality covering simultaneously text of the National Strategy on Improved Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality. Also, it published a book with the text of the CEDAW with Initial Reports of the Republic of Serbia and Final Comments of the CEDAW Committee. Also, it supported publication of the book titled Women and Men in Serbia with the latest comparable statistical data.

The challenges with which the Directorate faces are still related to the issues of the capacity and insufficient resources, high dependence on international donations, which is particularly present in the period of the global economic crisis. However, the Directorate invests efforts to respond effectively to these challenges, which may be expected when the Action Plan is finally in implementation, and particularly when the Parliament adopts the Law on Gender Equality.