

Report of Ukraine
on issues of gender equality and prevention violence against women

Dear colleagues,

I have the honor to represent you a short report about the last achievements which Ukraine has made in the matters of providing equality between men and women, overcoming violence in family and cooperation with the international organizations, especially OSCE, in this field of activity. But I will also dwell on some concerns and problems that should be addressed as soon as possible.

The present state policy of Ukraine as regards **gender equality** takes a comprehensive approach which includes elimination of all forms of sex discrimination, creation of the necessary social and political prerequisites for the full realization of the men's and women's natural capacities in all spheres of public and private life.

Being committed to International Laws regarding women's rights and equality between women and men the National legislation is developed in Ukraine in this field. Two important laws have been adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament: "On guaranteeing the equal rights and opportunities for women and men" (8 September 2005) and "On amendment of some legislative acts of Ukraine in connection with the adoption of the law of Ukraine "About guaranteeing the equal rights and opportunities for women and men" (April 2008), which concerns four other acts of legislation, in particular the Labour Code (Article 13), the laws "About the associations of citizens" (Art. 20), "About collective agreements" (Art. 7, 8), and "About the Ombudsperson of the Parliament" (Art. 13). These amendments aim to promote gender equality in the Ukrainian society.

The State Program on the strengthening of gender equality in the Ukrainian society for the period to 2010 has been approved to support women in exercising their rights and opportunities in full.

The development of the legislation led to the practical achievements:

- with the aim of coordination of central executive bodies' efforts the Inter Agency Council for family, gender equality, population development and countering trafficking in persons was set up in September 2007;
- the legal examination of existing and future legislation with regard to gender equality is provided by Ministry of Justice of Ukraine;
- such advisory bodies as coordinating gender councils have been established in 19 State regional administrations;
- advisers to the governors on gender issues have been appointed in 12 regions of Ukraine;
- the expert working groups for the implementation of gender policies have been set up in 36 Ministries and other state institutions;
- gender component is introduced in science, education and enlightenment;
- the Statistics Committee of Ukraine issues a statistical compendium "Women and Men in Ukraine". This reference book as well as others give an objective introduction on the proportion of women and men in all spheres of social life.

But despite the progress made in guaranteeing gender equality many issues remain unresolved both at the legislative and practical levels. Thus, in all spheres of the society the gender discrimination exists either open or hidden.

1. The lack of balance between women and men in the political life is evident. The proportion of male and female number at all levels of power makes on the average 24 to 76 percent. It should be underscored that the higher position we look at, the lower is the percentage of women's there. For example, the percentage of women at the level of local authorities is 40/60%, whereas among the deputies of the Ukrainian Parliament there are only 8% of women. In the Cabinet of Ministers and other state institutions is the same rate. As a consequence women do not have serious influence on the decision making process, although they account for 54% of the Ukrainian population. Therefore, we believe that it would be advisable to introduce

some positive action like gender quota which should fix the proper representation of women in Parliament. This would increase the political role of women.

2. In the economic sphere almost all big property is in the men's hands (they control on average 90-95%), consequently women have less access to recourses.
3. We still have problems in the labor market. According to statistic the quantitative progress of women with higher education (56%) on the labor market has not yet been matched in qualitative terms. Women hold mostly the lower posts and have fewer chances to advance their professional career. Hence the pay gap exists as a result of the "vertical" professional segregation.

The next issue I would like to touch upon is also very serious and shouldn't be ignored. The **violence against women** is estimated to be the main obstacle towards gender equality. The studies data show that 95 % of victims of family violence are women. 150 governmental and non-governmental organizations operate in Ukraine helping the victims of violence. 22 centers of social and psychological aid that work twenty-four-hours can welcome 390 suffering persons and provide social services to the persons who are in difficult life circumstances. There are 4 centers of medical and social rehabilitation for victims of violence with the free "hotlines" where victims can get needed information.

In response to initiatives taken by a number of state institutions and organizations the Ukrainian Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence was adopted in 2002 and amended in October 2008. Following these legislative developments Ukrainian authorities, namely the Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports and the Interior Ministry, requested that the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine further assist with the amended law's implementation. In connection with an amendment that gives social service workers the task of developing methodologies for corrective work with domestic violence perpetrators, the PCU has been asked to present international best practices that could be adjusted to Ukrainian context.

In the mainstream of the World campaign on the elimination of violence against women that runs till 2015, the National Campaign “Stop violence” started on 15 May 2008 supported by the Ministries of Family, Youth and Sports, Interior? Justice and more than 60 non-governmental organizations.. The main objectives of Campaign are the following:

- to raise the awareness of the population, that the violence against women and children is the violation of human rights;
- to improve the legislation for more effective prevention of violence in family;
- to recognize the gravity of such a crime as the violence in family and to form intolerance towards this crime in public opinion.

We appreciate the effective assistance of the OSCE-Project Coordinator in Ukraine and hope for further fruitful cooperation in the spheres of promoting gender equality, overcoming domestic violence and combating trafficking in persons.