

MANUAL FOR THE MUNICIPAL
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
COMMISSIONS

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITES IN
THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT**



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MANUAL FOR THE MUNICIPAL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSIONS

OSCE Monitor Mission in Skopje, 2007

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Dear Readers,

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje has been privileged to cooperate with you over the past two years in efforts to promote gender equality at the level of local government. The adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men in 2006 opened yet another window of opportunity for the creation of a decentralization process that is equal, just and inclusive for all.

Within the framework of its Human Dimension pillar, the OSCE has been committed to assisting the participating states in promoting gender equality in the governing processes. Our joint vision is to strengthen democratic societies based on equality of rights and equal opportunities for women and men. Achieving this can only be done through policies that give opportunities to the underrepresented to have a stake in decision making.

With this aim, I am delighted to promote this Manual for the Municipal Equal Opportunities Commissions, the first of its kind in this country. As you will see, the Manual sets the parameters for the work of the Equal Opportunities Commissions which is based on the Law, providing you with the initial know-how on the concept of equal opportunities and the practical tools to mainstream this concept in your daily work.

I hope that you as local leaders will benefit from this Manual and that it will assist you to mainstream gender and equality into decision making as a process.

I would like to wish all of you success in your work.

Most sincerely,



Deputy Head of Mission
Natalya Drozd
OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

Forward by the authors

About the Manual!

This manual is a theoretical and practical tool destined for the Equal Opportunities Commissions (EOC) in all the municipalities throughout the country in the City of Skopje, with a view to assist them in their work. In the following 20 pages, a review of the legal framework of the introduction of the gender dimension on an international and national level has been presented, as well as the process of decentralisation and the importance of introducing the gender concept within societal frameworks and in the policies themselves, especially on a local level, the mandate of the Equal Opportunities Commissions and the modes for reaching gender equality, that is, providing equal opportunities for women and men.

The existence of a legal framework is a prerequisite, but not a complete guarantee that the equal opportunities between women and men will be respected. The materialisation of the gender concept and the provision of equal opportunities for women and men is possible only provided that individuals develop and attend to the awareness of respecting the equity between the sexes and only provided that they practically engage in the local communities. The incorporation of the diverse priorities and interests into the programmes and activities within your local communities may bring about an accelerated growth and development, the advantages of which will be enjoyed equally by women and men. We, as activists in the women's movement in the country, are honoured that we are able to make our contribution to something that ought to be a continual process.

We believe that this manual will be of use to you, Co-ordinators and members of the Equal Opportunities Commissions!

From the authors,

Biljana Manaskova

Gordana Trenkoska

1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The recognition of the equality between the sexes and the strategic efforts for equal opportunities for women and men are legally regulated and articulated in a series of international and national documents. From among the international agreements and documents which have been ratified by the Parliament, and which the Government has obliged to implement, we mention the following: *the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Man from 1948; the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women from 1979;*¹ *the Beijing Platform for Action from 1995; the UN Agenda 21 (the Developmental Agenda and the Millennium Developmental Objectives); the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights; the Cairo Programme for Action for Population and Development; the Copenhagen Action Plan for Social Development; and the Istanbul Action Plan for Housing and Settlements.* All the listed international documents emphasise the significance of achieving equality between women and men, directly and/or indirectly, that is, the integration of the gender dimension into the “process of evaluation of the implications to women and men from any planned activity including the legislation, the policies or programmes in all the areas and on all levels”.²

In addition to the legally binding documents, the international organisations also prescribe recommendations which help the states in their efforts for achieving democratic values including gender equality. Thus, for instance, in the *Development Agenda and the Millennium Developmental Goals of the United Nations*, there are guidelines and recommendations of how the member states should act in order to reduce by half the number of the extremely poor population, to provide conditions that will ensure that every child can have education and live a long and healthy life, and to put an end to the discrimination of women. Thereby, the Third Millennium Goal emphasizes that there is no progress without gender equality which challenges discrimination towards women and insists that there be created equal conditions for education of girls and boys. As indicators, the following are mentioned: a decrease in the number of illiterate women, gaining greater power and representation in the public policy and decision-making, and improvement of the employment opportunities.

A particular significance is given to the *OSCE National Plan for Gender Equality* as one of the documents that determine the obligations of all the participating states with regard to the human dimension and the creation of conditions for equal opportunities on a local and national level. Thereby, the main emphasis is placed on the creation of legal and political frames and processes for full enjoyment of the equal opportunities and the benefit of gender mainstreaming.

¹ In November 2004, the Government submitted the *Government's Report on the Status of Women* to UN/CSW, which was presented and defended in the course of January 2006. In the part dedicated to the guidelines for introducing the gender concept in the societal frameworks and building the institutional mechanisms for gender equality there was underlined the continuation of the process of building and strengthening the mechanisms for equal opportunities on a national and a local level. In addition, a shadow report was also submitted by the *Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Macedonia*.

² A part of the definition of: Economic and Social Council of the General Assembly (ECOSOC) 1997, 1998, L.O. Para. 4, adopted by ECOSOC 17/7/97.

LEGAL, POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN THE COUNTRY

The Constitution as the highest legal and political act guarantees the fundamental rights and freedoms of the citizens creating conditions for equality and equal opportunities for all the citizens notwithstanding their sex, race, colour of skin, national and social background, political and religious affiliation, property and social position.³

The provisions in the Constitution are reflected upon in a series of legal acts which determine more closely the principle of equality between the sexes. For instance, the Law on Employment sanctions the direct and indirect discrimination with regard to gender during the recruitment procedure and in the workplace itself.⁴ A step forward for the implementation of the principle of equal treatment of women and men is the *Law on Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men* enacted on 26th May 2006.⁵

The strategic with regard to the equal opportunities is the *National Action Plan for Gender Equity*, enacted by the Government in May 2000, and which is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, more precisely by the Sector for the Improvement of Equality between the Sexes.⁶ In the National Action Plan, the strategic goals were defined, whereby one of them is the incorporation of the gender dimension into the process of standardisation and institutionalisation of the gender dimension in the societal processes and relations. The National Action Plan for Gender Equity is in an ongoing process of revision.

In accordance with the strategic priorities of the National Action Plan, the Government is undertaking activities for the establishment and strengthening of a *national system of institutional mechanisms for overcoming the gender inequity at all levels*, which also means a creation of conditions for the functioning of bodies within the local self-government units. They are a part of the institutions of the system for establishing democratic and political models for the inclusion of women in the societal processes of decision-making, the attaining of social justice, and providing a sustainable economic growth and development.

In summary, the legal and institutional framework for gender equality in the country consists of the following elements:

- 1) A legal framework: the Constitution, the Law on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, the Law on Anti-discrimination and other laws which contain appropriate provisions;
- 2) A National Action Plan for Equality between Women and Men;

³ Article 9, the Constitution

⁴ Article 6 and Article 7 of the Law on Employment, the Official Gazette, No. 62 as of 28th July 2005.

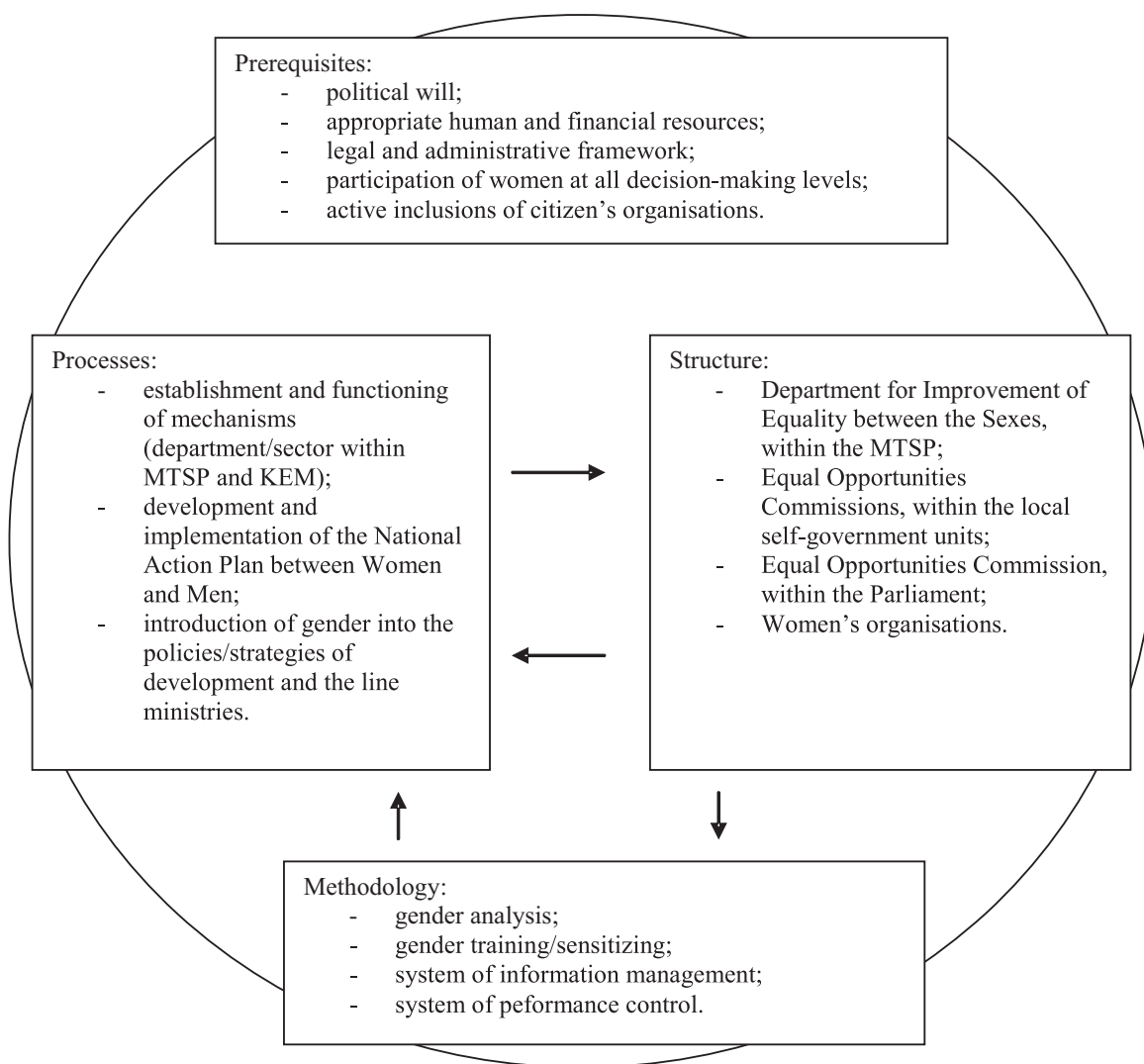
⁵ Law on Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men, the Official Gazette No. 66/06

⁶ In the course of 2000, Department for Improvement of Equality between the Sexes

- 3) Institutional bodies: the Sector for Improvement of Equity between the Sexes,⁷ the Commission for Equal Opportunities within the Parliament,⁸ the Commissions for Equal Opportunities in the municipalities, boards, councils;
- 4) The Ombudsman;
- 5) Political dimension Gender quotas within the electoral system and Gender-sensitive statistics on the national level;
- 6) Gender studies, recognised and institutionally incorporated in the public educational system (accredited at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje 2007);

Non-governmental organisations: the Union of Organisations of Women UOWM (SOZM), the Association of Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality ESE, the Research Centre for Gender Studies, the Euro-Balkan Institute, the “Zdrzenska” Action and others.

The gender picture in the country



⁷ This body was established in January 1998 under the name of Department for Improvement of Equity between the Sexes, within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The Department has grown into a sector in 2007.

⁸ Formed in 2006.

2. INTEGRATION OF THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN THE MAIN STREAMS FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY (GENDER MAINSTREAMING)

According to the gender equality concept women and men are free to develop their personal abilities and to freedom to choose without limitations from the established stereotypes, prejudices and strict gender roles. This means that the diverse behaviours, aspirations, necessities of women and men ought to be respected, valued and assisted. Hence, their rights, responsibilities and possibilities will not depend on whether they have been born as females or males. In a social-political context, this means that gender equality refers to the equal sharing of power between women and men, in their equal approach to the educational and health care services, the administrative and managerial positions, equal payment for the labour for the same value and equal representation in the government on a national and local levels.

Almost in all of the mentioned conventions and international legal instruments there is envisaged undertaking of adequate actions by the member states in order to respect the principle of non-discrimination and equality of women and men. According to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from 1995, the governments in the world, and this including the Government, are obliged to apply the principle of “equal opportunities and immanent human dignity for all women and men” and they stipulate measures for the improvement of equality between men and women. For that purpose, in paragraph 202, it is recommended that governments and other institutions should promote an active and visible policy of incorporation of the gender perspective into all the main political streams, currents and programmes in order for the expected effects for women and men to be analysed before decisions are made.

More specifically, the efforts and recommendations ought to translate into “a general acceptance of the gender perspective in the process of evaluation of the implications on the women and men of any planned activity including legislation, policies or programmes in all the spheres and on all levels. This is a strategy for the issues/questions and for the experiences of women and men in the insistence that they become an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all the political, economic and social spheres, so that women and men will have equal gains and there will be no continuation of inequality. The ultimate objective is to achieve gender equality.”⁹

The implementation of such a strategy requires a wide mobilisation of all the relevant entities in the society. The process of integration of the gender perspective has huge implications in the policies and programmes themselves, as well as their implementation whereby a development of human resources is enabled. Hence, the responsibility for implementing a strategy for achieving gender equality is connected to all the levels of the decision-making structures. On a national level, these are the President of the Government, the Parliament and the line ministries. At the level of the local community, that is the Mayor and the Municipality Council.

⁹ A part of a definition of: Economic and Social Council of the General Assembly (ECOSOC) 1997, 1998, L.O. Para. 4, adopted by ECOSOC 17/7/97.

3. DECENTRALISATION

The Law on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men emphasises the importance of incorporation of the principle of equal opportunities into the mainstreams of the reorganisation, improvement, development and assessment of the political processes on all the levels and in all the stages. Therefore the local self-government units are obliged to form and create conditions for the functioning of the Commissions for Equal Opportunities. The consistent implementation of the decentralisation of the government with a view to a successful development of the democratic processes in the country directly and indirectly affects the everyday life of women and men. Their equal participation in the decision-making structures and processes may play a significant role in the creation of policies and actions at the level of the municipality which may lead to successful local economic growth and development.¹⁰

Because of the fact that the local self-government, in its broadest sense of the word, is a form of decentralisation of power, pursuant to the Law on Local Self-government, the municipalities are legal entities and they carry out their competencies through bodies which are directly elected by the citizens. They simultaneously have the right to independently perform the competences as prescribed by the Law.¹¹

The municipality arranges its competences¹² with the Statute and other regulations (a Rulebook for the Council's Work, decisions, plans and programmes, resolutions, conclusions and other acts), and it implements them by means of its bodies as determined by law. In this context, we would like to emphasise the importance of the Commissions of the Council which perform the following competences: they discuss the issues in the sphere for which they have been established; they give opinions and suggestions to the Council; and they review the suggestions by the Mayor, the Council members and the initiatives of the citizens from the areas for which they have been established.

The local self-government makes decisions which equally refer to men and women in the municipality. The local self-government makes decisions which refer to the creation of policies, providing public services, employment and decision-making regarding the individual rights and obligations.

¹⁰ According to the Law on Local Self-government, "Municipality" is a unit of the local self-government, a community of the inhabitants in a certain region, as regulated by law, which, through its bodies, the administration and the organised public services, provides carrying out of the competences as determined by law (the Official Gazette of the RM, No. 5 as of 29th January 2002).

¹¹ "The competence of the municipality" is a sum of operations of public interest with local significance which the municipality, in accordance with the Law on Local Self-government, is entitled to perform on its region and is responsible for their carrying out.

¹² According to Article 22 of the Law on Local Self-government (the Official Gazette of the RM, No. 5 as of 29th January 2002), the municipalities are responsible for performing the following activities: urbanistic (urban and rural) planning; protection of the environment and nature; the local economic development; the municipal activities; the culture; sport and recreation; the social protection and protection of children; education; health care; implementation preparations and undertaking measures for protection and rescue of the citizens and the material goods from natural disasters and other accidents and from the consequences caused by them; fire protection; supervision over the performance of the activities from its competence; and other activities as determined by law. The competences in this Article shall be carried out in accordance with the standards and procedures as determined by law, with which also the activities from the competence of the municipality are determined, which the municipality will obligatorily perform.

4. MANDATE OF THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

A well organised local self-government, in addition to the other prescribed competences, is necessary to strive for a consistent implementation of the principle of equal opportunities or integration of the gender concept into the organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of all the processes, on all levels and in all the stages at the level of the municipality. The efforts for gender equality impose the necessity for building and implementing a strategy for overcoming the traditional stereotypical gender roles, as well as an appropriate visibility of the equal opportunities for women and men in the community.

The building of the mechanisms for equal opportunities in the municipalities throughout the country has commenced as an initiative raised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, by the Department for Improvement of Equality between the Sexes and the Union of Organisations of Women in the course of 2000 and 2001. The efforts of lobbying have started to yield results with the establishment of the first Commissions for Gender Equality (nowadays nominated as Commissions for Equal Opportunities) without the existence of a legal regulation in the course of 2003, 2004 and 2005. A strong impulse in the process of establishing the commissions has been provided by the Project “Promotion of the Gender at Local Level” initiated by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and the Embassy of the USA, and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, more precisely, with the Department for Promotion of Equality between the Sexes and the Union of Organisations of Women. The project activities evolved in the course of 2004 and 2005, and they consisted of building of the institutional and human capacities of the commissions.¹³

After the enactment of the Law on Equal Opportunities in May 2006, a legally binding basis was created for the municipalities to establish Equal Opportunities Commissions. The mandate of the Commissions is determined in the Law on Equal Opportunities and with the National Action Plan for the Promotion of Equality between the Sexes.

DEFINITION OF THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LAW¹⁴

“The equal opportunities of women and men, in dignity and right means promotion of the principle of introducing equal participation of women and men in all the spheres of the public and private sectors, equal status and treatment in the realisation of all the rights and in the development of their individual potentials through which they contribute to the societal development, as well as equal gains from the results from that development”.

¹³ From December 2004, the first 10 Commissions for Gender Equality began to function in the following municipalities: Veles, Probistip, Delcevo, Kocani, Kavadarci, Prilep, Bitola, Krivogastani, Tetovo and Struga. In the course of 2006, commissions were also opened in the following municipalities: Vrapciste, Karpos, Vinica, Krusevo and Debar.

¹⁴ Article 4, Law on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, the Official Gazette, No. 66/06.

“The equal treatment” of women and men means absence of direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of sex. *“Discrimination”* means every differentiation, exploitation or constraint on the basis of sex, which has as a consequence to endanger or impede the realisation or protection of human rights and freedoms. *“Direct discrimination”* means a creation of an unequal treatment with regulations or actions of certain entities depending on the sex in same or similar situations in the realisation, respect and protection of the human rights and freedoms. *“Indirect discrimination”* means creation of an unequal treatment of persons of different sex with regulations, standards or attitudes which formally envisage equal opportunities or are seemingly neutral, but apply differently depending on the sex, except if that is in the interest of and is necessary for providing special protection or it is caused due to objective conditions and circumstances which are not connected to the sex.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSIONS

The mandate of the Equal Opportunities Commissions is determined in Article 16 of the Law on Equal Opportunities,¹⁵ where it is prescribed:

(1) The units of the local self-government in order to achieve the objective of this law within its competences are obliged to determine and improve the equal opportunities and to respect the principle of equal opportunities when adopting measures and activities which are needed for the establishment of the equal opportunities.

(2) The units of the local self-government are obliged to establish a commission for equal opportunities and to assign a person from the ranks of the employees or other persons competent and expert for carrying out the responsibilities of the co-ordinator for equal opportunities of women and men, to participate in the preparation of the national action plan for equal opportunities of women and men in the segment which refers to the units of the local self-government.

(3) The Commission for Equal opportunities as referred to in paragraph (2) of this Article shall be established as a permanent body with a decision by the council at the unit of the local self-government, and its composition, competences, tasks and responsibilities shall be determined with the statute of the unit of the local self-government.

(4) The bodies of the units of the local self-government when adopting the development plans and other acts and decisions, are obliged to review and take into consideration the suggested measures and activities by the equal opportunities commission and the equal opportunities co-ordinator.

(5) The bodies of the units of the local self-government are obliged to co-operate with the associations of the employers, the trade union, the non-governmental organisations and associations of citizens active in the filed of equal opportunities with the purpose to provide suggestions and measures for achieving the objective of the Law.

Pursuant to Article 17 of the same law, the Equal Opportunities Commission is obliged to submit a report about its work to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy at least once a year.

In the Law on Equal Opportunities, in Articles 42 and 43, the penal provisions are determined.

¹⁵ Official Gazette, No. 66/06

Thereby, the entities which will not submit periodical plans for establishment and promotion of equal opportunities to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy before the beginning of the implementation of the positive measures for prior opinion, or if they do not submit the required documents and information to the representative, shall be punished for offence with a fine in the amount between 100,000 and 200,000 denars. The responsible person within the bodies of the units of the local self-government who will not appoint a coordinator for equal opportunities shall be punished for offence with a fine in the amount between 10,000 and 15,000 denars.

The equal opportunities commission is an institutional mechanism of gender equality which will provide integration of the gender dimension, that is, sensitizing in the institutional action and inclusion of an increasing number of entities. Thereby, the introduction of the gender perspective ensures that the problems, priorities and experiences from the everyday life of the women and men be taken into account in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the legal framework, policies and programmes. All this is directed towards the creation of possibilities for overcoming inequality. The municipality ought to pay attention to and respond positively to the demands of the citizens, as well as to demonstrate the efforts in the light of improvement of gender equality in the everyday work and in the relations with the rest of the entities.

More specifically, the Commission in its continuous work for creating equal opportunities between women and men in the local community, ought to be led by the following principles:

To promote and support an approach which pays attention to the introduction of the gender mainstreaming in the process of decision-making;

To improve gender equality in the local community with regard to the role and participation of both sexes in the public and political life as a significant aspect for the development of the civic society;

To generate institutional conditions for the promotion and respect of the women's rights, as well as their inclusion in the activities for development of the municipality in all the spheres of social life;

The members of both gender are to be active participants in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in the political, economic and social spheres;

For the achievement of the set objectives and tasks, to practice diverse forms of organised action in co-operation with the non-governmental organisations, the media and the wider public.

The following are highlighted as *forms of realisation of the activities of the Equal Opportunities Commission*: public debates, round tables, individual initiatives, calls, lobbying and creative pressures, organisation of debates and public discussions on certain issues, forums, workshops, seminars, initiation of modifications of legal acts, campaigns, influence over the councilors, establishment of coalitions of NGOs for organised action, establishment of partnership with the business sector, information for the citizens, media coverage, print material, and radio and television launches.

5. CREATION OF POLICIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The policies are defined as plans of action which direct the decisions and the undertaking of activities by the government, organisations, institutions, groups and individuals. In the process of creation of policies different alternatives can be identified, like the programmes or priorities are set as regards the spending of funds, and a choice among them is being made on the grounds of the influence of the effect

which they will have in the community. The policies are understood as political, governing, financial and administrative mechanisms created for the purpose of reaching the set goals.

The creation of any policy, and thus its implementation may be carried out in two ways: by the central government to the local self-government units, what is known as the centralistic oriented approach and by the local self-government units themselves. Bearing in mind the significance of decentralisation for the democratic processes, the necessity for introducing the gender concept is obvious, and ultimately incorporation of the gender dimension in the policies of the local self-government units.

In this sense, we can talk about gender sensitive policies. *These are policies which are formulated for the purpose of the necessities of women and men under equal conditions within the framework of the current distribution of the resources and the responsibilities.* Thereby, we can distinguish *gender-blind, gender-conscious and gender-redistributive policies.* *Gender-blind policies* are those policies that do not distinguish between the necessities of women and men and above all they accept the existing gender relations which can result in the exclusion of women. *Gender-conscious policies* are those which depart from the fact that both women and men are participants in the development, whereby their necessities, interests and priorities are distinct and occasionally they can contradict each other. *Gender-redistributive policies* are focused on the transformation of the existing distribution of the resources and responsibilities so as to improve the equality between women and men.

In the Beijing Platform for Action from 1995, *the following steps for the incorporation of the gender dimension on a national and a local level were stated:*

Step 1: *Existence of gender-distributed statistics and gender-analytical information:* The fundamental thing is the existence of gender-distributed statistics and gender-analytical research for effective and efficient introduction of the gender concept. The systems of information and data ought to be timely distributed by gender; it is necessary to prepare gender-analytical studies so as to identify the gender differences and existence of cases of gender inequality, and monitoring of the different influence of the policies, projects and budgets on women and men.

Step 2: *Women and men have influence within the framework of the developmental agenda:* women will reach equality in the societal frames and streams only when they will show that they are capable to take action on their own and they are fully included in the decision-making structures and processes at all levels.

Step 3: *A specific and all-encompassing action for the promotion of gender equality:* The introduction of the gender concept covers a strategy for the improvement of gender equality and empowerment of women, which is necessary to be implemented by means of an action for promoting a greater equality of influences, opportunities and benefits, through a clear understanding of the problems, needs and priorities of women and men.

Step 4: *Building and strengthening of the capacities of the diverse entities and introducing changes:* The introduction of the gender dimension is an organisational strategy for the improvement of gender equality, which depends on the level of possessing skills, knowledge and commitments of the entities involved in the management and the implementation. It is necessary to explicitly include appropriate activities for building the capacities in the political and project documents and acts, supported by human resources and budgets, as well as to be monitored and revised by means of adequate indicators of change.

It is important that the Equal Opportunities Commissions implement in their work the following methodologies for the introduction of the gender perspective on a local level:

- *Gender analysis* is part of the process of creation, implementation and evaluation of policies from the public sphere which are important for the sustainability and development of the community. It uses different methods in order to comprehend the relations between women and men, their approach to the resources, their activities and limitations with which they are faced when they are mutually connected. It needs to provide information about the importance of gender in the understanding of the diverse forms of engagement, attitude and activities which women and men have in the economic, social and legal structures. The analysis ought to be also concentrated on the different procedures in the creation of the policies in order to ensure knowledge and to propose a reorganisation which will result in integration of the gender perspective;
- *Gender training* is a process of building capacities of the participants in the creation of policies. The training programmes ought to contain the topics such as the following: gender sensitizing, gender analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies;
- *System of information management* is a mechanism for collecting information necessary for the implementation of gender analysis and sharing of results, using gender-distributed data and gender-sensitive indicators;
- *System of performance control* is a system of assessing effects from the implementation of a certain policy as regards the goals set in specific areas of the local living.

The methodologies of introducing the gender concept basically use the tripartite approach of introducing the gender dimension: *empowerment* directed to a control over the decisions and issues which have influence in the everyday life; *integration* by using a systemic and holistic approach; and *accountability* when carrying out an action and monitoring of the effect from the implemented changes.

6. HOW TO REACH GENDER EQUALITY?

The creation and implementation of policies at the municipal level ought to lead towards reaching gender equality and enjoying the equal opportunities for women and men. In this part of the manual we shall put an emphasis on part of the *implementation instruments*. To that end, the Equal Opportunities Commissions can use the *gender budgeting and the tools for socio-economic and gender analysis*. Although the gender analysis was previously mentioned as a methodology of creating policies, people in theory and in practice have developed an entire system of tools for evaluation of the socio-economic issues from a gender perspective.

GENDER BUDGETING

Budgeting implies planning of revenues and expenditures within a determined time frame. *The budgeting is not only a financial tool for balancing between the revenue and expenditure sides. As a process, also, it represents a method of establishing priorities and making decisions on issues that affect the current*

and future situation of people and their environment. It is necessary for the budget planners to have knowledge of the situation, as well as to be aware of the consequences of establishing priorities that affect the lives of men and women, now and in the future. The budgeting frequently represents making decisions between the competitive priorities, and the decisions on local and national level are made on the behalf of women and men.

The gender budgeting is a process through which are reconsidered the public budgets in order to assess whether and to what extent they include and/or contribute to equality between men and women, as well as to propose changes with a view to reaching gender equality. Thereby, gender analysis of the budgets provides assistance to the authorities to decide on how to adjust the political decisions so as to achieve maximum influence, as well as where the resources should be reallocated so as to reach a higher level of human development and gender equality.

It should be admitted that the gender budgeting is a radical concept, but basically it is an incorporating concept. The gender budgeting does not imply creating special budgets for women, but rather it implies planning and implementing a budget which takes into consideration the necessities, priorities and problems of women and men, as well as their roles within the family, workplace and community. Because of the fact that women and men mainly have different social and economic positions, the budgets fundamentally have a different impact on them. The ignoring of the gender impact of the budgets is not neutrality, but rather gender blindness that can lead to high human and economic costs: lesser productivity, lesser development of the capacities of people and lower levels of overall well-being.

The initiatives for gender budgeting may be implemented in all the stages of the budgeting process: planning, adoption, implementation and revision. The specific goals set are directed towards the strengthening of the awareness about the gender relevant impact on the policies and the respective budget allocations, emphasis on the gap between the political and budget allocations, obligation of the authorities to be accountable with regard to their commitments to gender equality and changes in the policies and budgets which would help to improve the status of women, as well as to reach gender equality.

The ultimate goal of the gender budgeting is the creation of a budget in which the gender concept is integrated, that is collecting revenues and creating plans for public spending in which is reflected the equal distribution of the resources with a view to cover and satisfy the necessities of women and men.

EXAMPLES OF GENDER-SENSITIVE BUDGETS

When a budget is being considered from a gender perspective, one should bear in mind that the *gender budgeting involves the tracking the route of the money flow up until the persons who benefit from the spending. This implies reviewing the expenditures, activities, results and impacts from the political decisions.* Hence, the linking between the public spending and the policies run by the authorities, in fact, is an evaluation of the obligations in the policies. The binding of the public spending with the effects is directed towards providing a realistic image of the budget, which is the main task of gender budgeting.

The initiatives of gender budgeting involve a range of diverse activities: research, representation, monitoring, training, a process of awareness strengthening, and analysis and design of policies and actions.

The gender distributed statistics is the basis of a solid budget plan. Such data imply *specified data about women compared with the same about men*. These data are fundamental with the purpose of evaluation of the influence of budgets over gender relations.

Here enclosed are some examples on gender-sensitive budgets, which have been used in the Netherlands, a country with developed local self-government. The first example refers to the process of raising funds and making decisions about financing certain priority issues. The second example refers to the process of making a decision under conditions of limited resources for funding and determining priorities by the local authorities. The third example refers to the process of making a decision about the construction of a children's playground in which the interests of girls and boys ought to be indirectly covered. This example may be used as a guideline of how to encompass the interests, priorities and problems of the specific target group.

Example 1: Where do the local authorities obtain their money from? There are huge differences between the local and regional authorities in the European countries with regard to their ability to collect taxes. In the Netherlands (an example of the most successfully organised local self-government), the property tax is the crucial resource of revenues for the municipalities. There are also other resources of revenues, such as: municipal fees, parking fees etc. It should be stressed that an important resource of revenues for the local authorities is the budget funds allocated by the national authorities for the units of the local self-government. The local authorities may ask for grants and funds for specific projects or programmes from national or international sources which cover certain socio-economic matters.

Example 2: The local municipal authority disposes with limited financial means for the following year. As priorities for financing in the following fiscal year are imposed the reconstruction of a local road and improvement of the sanitary conditions in the pre-school and school institutions in the municipality. The Commission on Urbanism and Construction Works has submitted to the Municipal Council the decision that the priority for financing ought to be given to the project for a local road, on which location, according to the general urban plan, there are several local investors and there have already been allocated permits for the construction of two new factories which will employ approximately 300 young qualified staff. This Commission does not take into account the gender concept and its indirect impact in the making of the decision. On the other hand, the Equal Opportunities Commission submits to the Municipal Council its opinion that the priority for financing ought to be the project for improving the sanitary conditions in the pre-school and school institutions in the municipality with the explanation that the healthy environment has a long-term and indirect impact on the development of girls and boys. In addition, this commission gives its opinion regarding the project for construction of a local road, posing the question to the Commission on Urbanism and Construction Works and the Municipal Council of whether equal attention is being paid to the women and men about their employment in the factories. The Municipal Council after the consideration of the decisions by the two commissions makes the decision that the project for the local road should be financed emphasising that the priority of the municipality is the local economic development and thereby obliging itself to adhere to the gender component when employing the young staff.

Example 3: Construction of a children's playground by means of a gender-sensitive budget. The unit of the local self-government decides that on the expenditure side of the budget for the next year it will set

aside funds in the amount of EUR 10,000.00 for the construction of a children's playground. This playground is to be intended for recreational activities for children aged 6 to 14. The Municipal Council cannot make a decision about which recreational instruments to place on the playground, and for that matter the Department for Urbanism together with the Equal Opportunities Commission conduct a small survey among the children in the municipality. Through investigating the wishes, interests and necessities for recreation of 100 children (girls and boys), the following gender-specific budgetary plan for this playground has been prepared. Taking into consideration the interests of the children whereby the gender component is complied with, a financial construction of a budget for a children's playground may be made in the amount of EUR 10,000.00.

Children's wishes expressed through priorities	Space expressed in % of the total surface of the playground	Necessary budget as a tranche for each activity (EUR)
Swings	10%	1.500,00
Frame for climbing	15%	3.000,00
Marble playing-field	10%	500,00
Swings	15%	1.500,00
Football pitch	70%	4.500,00
Children's game of "sky – hell"	10%	500,00
Skating rink	15%	1.500,00
Table tennis	15%	1.000,00
Tennis court	60%	3.000,00
Streching area	5%	500,00
Total	225%	17.500,00

TOOLS FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND GENDER ANALYSIS (SEAGA)

*The socio-economic and gender analysis is a system of tools for evaluation of certain issues essential for the development of the community on the basis of research on the socio-economic context and the participating identification of the priorities of women and men.*¹⁶ Such an analysis ensures a successful development by means of sustainability, equality and efficiency, whereby the developmental challenges, the limitation of the previous approaches, the accessibility and co-ordination of the methods and tools are highlighted. The integrating, inter-disciplinary and multi-sector character of the approach emphasises the links between the macro and micro processes, the links between the different participants and the participation of the carriers of the identification of the development priorities.

Thereby, the leading priorities are: the gender roles are crucial to the development, and the equal participation of women and men is essential for creating partnerships and reducing poverty. The process ought to include an assessment of the necessities of women and men, development of modules, modification and adaptation, and dissemination of information. It is particularly important to stress the co-operation at the inter-sector level with the view to increase the limited financial resources, to combine the knowledge and experience, and to present a unified message. *The components of the socio-economic and gender analysis are:*

- *Analysis of everyday life;*
- *Analysis of the interests and priorities of the participants;*
- *Analysis of the resources and obstacles, and data on the development context.*

The local authorities, following the participatory planning of development, have the possibility to identify the crucial development models, to understand the strategies in the everyday lives of different people and to build a consensus on the development priorities and plans for action. This provides the involvement of women and men to actively make decisions about their development, a close co-operation between the authorities and the local population, and implementation of successful development programmes and policies.

The understanding of the socio-cultural and economic system at any level (macro, meso and micro) is necessary with the aim to:

- Clarify the components of the equality issue connected to gender, age, ethnicity, race and/or other social characteristics;
- Identify the assumptions of the problems;
- Evaluate the assumptions as regards the existing information;
- Formulate the planning objectives;
- Specify activities necessary for achieving the objectives;
- Find possibilities for carrying out changes;
- Identify the obstacles;
- Identify the necessary resources;
- Specify the stages of action; and
- Accept accountability.

For the purposes of this part was used the manual *SEAGA Field Handbook*; Vicki Wilde, FAO/SEAGA Programme, Gender and Development Service; 2001. SEAGA is the international abbreviation from the English Socio-economic and gender analysis used by the UN/FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)

GENDER TERMINOLOGY:

Gender mainstreaming systematic integration of certain issues, priorities and necessities of women and men in the policies with the purpose of promoting equality between women and men and mobilising the resources for achieving equality, active and open taking into consideration on the level of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

Equal treatment for women and men ensuring absence of discrimination on grounds of sex, directly or indirectly;

Equality between women and men sex equality a principle of equal rights and equal treatment for women and men;

Equal opportunities for women and men non-existence of obstacles to economic, political and social participation on grounds of sex;

Gender an analytical concept which refers to socially determined roles, behaviours, values, activities and characteristics which a given community considers to be appropriate for women and men. Gender is an acquired identity which is learnt, changeable over time and variable in and through cultures;

Gender analysis investigation of the differences of conditions, the degree of participation, access to resources and development, control over resources, opportunities for decision-making, etc., between women and men in their assigned roles according to their gender;

Gender dimension an aspect of any issue which pertains to gender differences in the lives of women and men;

Gender equality a concept according to which all people are free to develop their personal abilities and to make a free choice without a limitation on the strictly determined gender roles; a concept according to which the different behaviour, strivings and necessities of women and men are equally appreciated, considered and favoured;

Gender relations relations and unequal allocation of power between women and men who characterise a specific gender system;

Gender perspective is a point of view of the gender differences in any political area/activity, whereby a general acceptance is an assessment of the implications of each planned action on women and men, including legislation, policies and/or programmes in all the areas and at all levels;

Gender equity equitable treatment of the sexes, through an equal or different treatment, equivalently in the sense of the rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities;

Gender relations social relations between women and men, which are at the same time relations of co-operation, linking and mutual support, but also of conflict, division and competition, of difference and inequality. The interest refers to the distribution of power between the sexes, which generate and reproduce systemic differences in the positions of women and men in a given society. They define the ways in which the responsibilities and rights are ensured, as well as their evaluation. This term also refers to the relations

between people and their wider community.

Gender relevance issues about whether a certain policy or action is relevant to the gender relations/equality between men and women;

Gender sensitizing is a process of strengthening the awareness of gender and its principles. This is achieved by means of providing possibilities for appropriate access to the educational and health care services, resources and decision-making power, as well as strengthening of the public awareness for equal active participation of both sexes in the structures and processes, with the view to attaining certain control in the life environment itself;

Gender sensitivity encompasses the ability to comprehend and highlight the existence of gender differences, issues and inequalities, as well as the integration into the strategies and actions for their overcoming;

Gender roles are especially important because gender can affect the creation of opportunities and obstacles for women and men in providing security in their everyday lives. Gender affects the roles and relations between people through their activities, including the labour and the decisive roles of women and men. In addition, it is important to understand the public roles of both women and men as regards the institutions which determine the access to the resources and power on a national and local level.

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