

THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT

2527

Pursuant to Article 80 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament at its session held on 13th October 2006, adopted the following:

NATIONAL POLICY

FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY 2006-2010

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality is the basic strategic document of the Republic of Croatia which it has adopted in order to eliminate discrimination against women and to establish genuine gender equality by the implementation of the policy of equal opportunities for the period from 2006 to 2010.

The policy of gender equality and the empowerment of women is one of the fundamental principles of the democratic and social order of the Republic of Croatia, and is accepted at the highest state level through decisions by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Parliament, and the adoption of the National Strategic Action Plans in 1997 and 2001. After the first National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality, which the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted in 1997 for the period up to 2000, and the second National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2001-2005, adopted unanimously in 2001 by the Croatian Parliament, the third National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality (hereinafter. The National Policy) continues the tradition of the previous fundamental commitment and goals, redefining the national priorities, the manner of implementation and taking special measures in line with the altered social and political circumstances and the progress achieved. By the adoption of state plans of action, the commitment is confirmed that was taken on with the acceptance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, and it is continued with the political development of human rights without discrimination on the basis of gender as one of the essential characteristics of democracy and the rule of law.

Starting with the positive examples of the two previous national policies, but also the failings and problems noticed in the implementation of individual program tasks, the National Policy for the coming five year period contains a program of action based on the already adopted basic structure, with critical areas especially emphasised, but with a significantly greater recognition of the real possibilities of application of specific measures and activities, and their content, as well as time projections. The approach to work on measures to improve the status of women in political, social, economic, cultural and public life is aimed at improving the entire system of protection and promotion of gender equality and their inclusion in all areas of life in society in order to realize the general goals of the National Policy. These cover: 1) the improvement of the promotion and protection of the human rights of women 2) the creation of equal opportunities on the labour market 3) the introduction of gender sensitive education and up-bringing 4) the balance of the participation of women and men in decision making processes 5) the prevention of all forms of violence against women 6) improvement of the system of women's health care and 7) further strengthening of the institutional mechanisms and implementation methods of equal opportunities policies.

An integral part of the strategic framework for the promotion of gender equality is the second National Policy, with its programs and strategies where the goals and prescribed measures are defined for the improvement of the implementation of gender equality policy and general social position, not only of the female population as a whole, but also of individual target groups. Starting from the need for the synthesis and interaction of a large number of these documents as an important precondition for the establishment of a complete system of promotion of gender equality, the National Policy for Promotion of Gender Equality includes as an integral part the goals and activities in questions contained in: the National Strategy for Protection Against Domestic Violence of 2005-2007 and the Protocol for Action in Cases of Domestic Violence; the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2010; the National Program for Roma 2003; the National Program for the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings 2005-2008; the National Action Plan of Employment 2005-2008; the Conclusions from the 51st Session of the Economic and Social Council on the Status of Women on the Labour Market (2004); the Strategic Development of Official Statistics of the Republic of Croatia 2004-2012 and the Program of Statistical Activity of the Republic of Croatia 2004-2007; the National Report of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on the implementation of the goals of the Millennium Declaration of the UN; the National Program of the Republic of Croatia for Accession to the European Union and the National Strategy for Health Care for 2006 to 2011 and others.

The strategic approach is also founded on the commitments taken on with the signing of international agreements, the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and tasks in the process of accession to the European Union. Starting from the fact that gender equality is one of the fundamental rights of the European Community, and the provision of equal opportunities and the prevention of sex discrimination is a general goal and an integral part of its programs and politics, Croatia as a candidate country has undertaken to implement the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality. The goal is to systematically inform the public about policies, legal regulations and measures being taking for the long-term promotion of gender equality. In this way we are joining with the common goals and joint vision of the countries of the EU to create true equality of men and women, as a precondition for an effective democratic society in which the respect of human rights is a measure of its progress.

The legal basis for the adoption of the National Policy for Gender Equality was introduced into Croatian legislation with the coming into force of the Gender Equality Act (Official Gazette, no. 116/03), by which gender equality means that men and women are equally present in all fields of public and private life, that they have the same status, equal opportunities to realize all rights, and equal benefit of the results realized

II. THE LEGAL FOUNDATION

At the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament adopted the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality pursuant to Article 80 of the Constitution as an act which expresses the policy of the representative body of citizens and the body with legislative power in the Republic of Croatia.

The legal foundation for the adoption of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality for the period 2006 to 2010 is contained in the provisions of the Gender Equality Act, which establishes the general foundation for the protection and promotion of gender equality as a fundamental value of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia. Article

3 of the Constitution prescribes that gender equality is one of the highest values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia and the foundation for the interpretation of the Constitution. The adoption of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality is prescribed in Article 18, paragraph 2, on the basis of which the Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia orders the writing of the national policy for the promotion of gender equality and the supervision of its implementation.

The adoption of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality is also the direct implementation of Article 10 of the Act, which requires the introduction of special measures to confirm the regulations regulating individual areas of public life, and the obligations from Article 11 by which state bodies are obliged to apply special measures and adopt plans of action for the promotion and establishment of gender equality.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality is also being adopted on the basis of commitments taken on with the ratification by the Republic of Croatia of the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women as “an international agreement concluded and ratified in accordance with the Constitution and published, and which is in force and forms an integral part of the internal order of the Republic of Croatia, and in terms of legal force is above the law”.

In the process of accession talks with the European Union, the adoption and implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality also means the adoption and implementation of one of the important strategic documents by which the political criteria for membership are met, related to the further alignment of legislation with the *acquis communautaire* of the EU and the improvement of equal opportunities policies.

The decrees in the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality are founded on national legislation and other regulations and confirm the content of the guarantees of gender equality which are an integral part of international law, the *acquis communautaire*, the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, conventions of the International Labour Organization, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

III. INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The international and international law commitments of the Republic of Croatia in the field of the protection of human rights of women and the implementation of equal rights policies arise from the fundamental international agreements to which the Republic of Croatia is a party and also its membership of the United Nations and the Council of Europe, and the commitments taken on in the process of accession to the European Union.

1. United Nations Instruments

By acceding to the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women, and its supplements, adopted in New York at the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly of the UN in 2000, and the Final Declaration of the UN Commission on the Status of Women of 2005, which marked the tenth anniversary of its adoption, Croatia has undertaken to take further action to ensure their full and more rapid implementation, including the adoption of a national strategy and action plan to improve the status of women and establish gender equality.

The Republic of Croatia, as a party to the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, by notification of succession of 8th October 1991,

condemned discrimination against women and undertook to apply the principles and standards contained in the Convention by undertaking the appropriate special measures in social, political/legislative, economic and cultural fields, in order to achieve true gender equality. Pursuant to the provisions of the Convention on regular reporting on the progress achieved in its application to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Republic of Croatia, after the initial report submitted to the Committee in 1994 for the period 1990-1994, which was considered in 1998, submitted a second and third periodic report for the period 1995-2003 in October 2003. The report, at the request of the Committee, was supplemented in writing with additional replies in September 2004 and considered in January 2005 at the 673rd and 674th sessions (CEDAW/C/CRO/2-3). In the Concluding Comments adopted, the Committee took a positive stance towards the legislative and institutional changes in the Republic of Croatia, but pointed out the main areas of concern and called on Croatia to take the appropriate measures and provide answers in a combined fourth and fifth periodic report in 2009. The Committee especially emphasized in its recommendations the need to direct priority attention to the following critical areas:

- provision of more information about the status of women who are members of national minorities and disabled women
- ensure rapid, consistent and effective application of anti-discrimination legislation,
- insufficient knowledge of the legislative reforms by judges, persons responsible for implementation of the law, employers and lawyers
- insufficient statistical data disaggregated by gender and analysis of the effect of policies and programs aimed at eliminating discrimination of women,
- staffing and financial strengthening of the Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia to enable it to fulfil its role more effectively, better coordination and cooperation between the various mechanisms for gender equality and cooperation with the civil society,
- ensuring equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market
- elimination of discrimination of Roma women in employment, education, participation in public life and decision making, health care and obtaining the right to citizenship,
- implementation of the Act on Protection Against Domestic Violence and the National Strategy for Protection Against Domestic Violence, and the necessary education related to it,
- elimination of stereotypes in teaching plans and programs and textbooks, on gender roles and the need to educate teaching staff about issues relating to gender equality,
- increase the representation of women in local government structures,
- strengthen efforts in the fight against trafficking in women and girls and prevention of abuse of women through prostitution, including the application of the Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.

Along with the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, as the fundamental international legal act in the field of protection and promotion of the human rights of women, the Republic of Croatia as a member state of the United Nations has also undertaken to implement the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration – the political document of the UN for the 21st century adopted at the 55th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000. In line with the international agreement on developmental goals, all member states are obliged to draw up a basic national report, and a periodic report which will be used to monitor the progress in the implementation of the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Along with a reduction of relative poverty, the guarantee of education for all, the reduction of mortality of neonates and children, the improvement of the health of mothers, the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other diseases, the provision of sustainable development and global cooperation, the problem of gender equality

is especially emphasized with the empowering of women as millennium goal no. 3. In the National Report on the implementation of the goals of the Millennium Declaration, which the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted and sent to the UN Secretary General in September 2004, the following strategic development goals and priorities are defined in the area of gender equality up to 2015: 1) introduction of gender sensitive education in teaching plans and programs, 2) the increase the participation of women in the political decision making process 3) the economic empowerment of women 4) the prevention of all forms of violence against women 5) the improvement of processing of all forms of statistical data 6) the strengthening of media support for gender equality 7) harmonizing of private and professional life 8) strengthening of institutional mechanisms and 9) strengthening of the civil society.

Along with the instruments mentioned it is also necessary to point out the importance of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since the Republic of Croatia has ratified a certain number of ILO conventions (for example Convention no. 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation, Convention no. 100 on equal pay, Convention no. 156 on workers with family responsibilities, Convention no. 103 on maternity protection) and in 2000 it became a member of its Governing Body. The ratified conventions contain obligations in the area of the labour market, and they are also covered by this document.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality for 2006 to 2010 integrates the goals and measures of the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including the Concluding Comments of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals, by which the principles of the Declaration by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of July 2005 are confirmed, on the inclusion of a gender perspective through full and effective application of the provisions of the Convention as a precondition for fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals in the strategy of improving gender equality in the Republic of Croatia.

2. The policies of the Council of Europe

As a member state of the Council of Europe since 6th November 1996, the Republic of Croatia has accepted many international legal instruments in the field of human rights adopted within the framework of that organization and participates regularly in the work of its gender equality board. In a true sense the Council of Europe confirms the principle that the foundation of the policy of gender equality is non-discrimination, and gender equality is defined as the “equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life“. The anti-discrimination framework was established in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950 of the EHCR, as well as in a series of pertaining Protocols. Along with the acceptance of Protocol no. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights of 2000 which came into force in 2005 and relates to the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender, activities related to achieving genuine gender equality are defined through a series of other recommendations and resolutions. Starting from the importance of full political participation by women as the heart of the political equality of the genders, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the “Recommendations (2003) 3 on the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, by which member states are called to “commit themselves to promote balanced representation of women and men by recognising publicly that the equal sharing of decision-making power between women and men of different background and ages

strengthens and enriches democracy” and Resolution 176 (2004) on the introduction of gender mainstreaming at local and regional level; a strategy to promote equality between women and men in cities and regions” .

The Republic of Croatia, in line with the goal of strengthening the security of European citizens from the Action Plan adopted at the Third Summit for member states in Warsaw (16-17 May 2005), joined the Council of Europe Task Force to Combat Violence Against Women in order to prepare a joint pan-European campaign in the period from 2006 to 2007, and undertook to ratify the European Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings. By participating in the 6th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men (Stockholm, 8-9 June 2006), the Government of the Republic of Croatia accepted the resolution from the Conference “Achieving gender equality: a challenge for human rights and a prerequisite for economic development” thereby confirming its agreement with the application of the strategic goals and activities included, as the common European standards in strengthening the implementation of equal opportunities policies.

In March 2006 the European Commission sent the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee a document entitled “A Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men 2006–2010” which defines the priority areas of work and is a response to the demands of various partners that the process of achieving genuine gender equality in Europe should be speeded up. As particularly important topics for this period the following are emphasized: achieving equal economic independence for women and men, enhancing reconciliation of work, private and family life, promoting equal participation of women and men in decision making, eradicating gender based violence and trafficking, eliminating gender based stereotypes in society, promoting of gender equality outside the EU.

3. Obligations in the process of accession to the European Union

In European politics the expansion of gender equality holds one of the central positions. The equality of women and men is a joint and one of the fundamental values of the member states of the EU, provided for by the provisions of the European Community Treaty. Article 2 prescribes the promotion of equality of genders as the constant task of the European Community, in Article 3, (2) it states that its goal is to eliminate inequality and promote gender equality in all Community activities (gender mainstreaming). The three legal foundations in the area of equal opportunities cover a) the question of employment and occupation (Article 141 (3); b) questions beyond this area, that is the prevention of discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual orientation (Article 13) and c) the promotion of employment and improvement of living and working conditions (Article 137

The common policy of EU member states in the area of gender equality, which is also binding for Croatia, is further defined by the document the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality 2001–2005 by Council Decision 2001/51/EU by which the Community Program for Gender Equality was established. The Republic of Croatia is to accede to the Community Program for Gender Equality by signing the Memorandum on Agreement with the European Community Commission, and on the basis of the conditions established by the Framework Agreement of 22 November 2004 between the Republic of Croatia and the European Community on the general principles of participation by Croatia in the Community programs. The Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia is responsible for the implementation of the Program, and participation in the activities of the Program includes: 1) offering support to the organization of seminars to mobilize key participants in the area of gender equality, including up dating general information and dissemination of the results of relevant research; 2) participation in creating a Commission

database on the representation of women and men in decision making processes and 3) covering administrative costs related to the participation of representatives of Croatia as observers at meetings of the board running the program and other administrative support.

Furthermore, it is necessary to point out that the European Commission in its reports regularly assesses the progress made by Croatia in the development of equal opportunity policies.

For example, in the conclusion of the Avis (opinion) by the European Commission on the Republic of Croatia's application to join the European Union (COM/2004/257) it states that alignment has begun with the *acquis* in the area of labour law, safety at work, public health, equal treatment of women and men and prevention of discrimination and it concludes that more progress is necessary. It is also assessed that regarding equal treatment of women and men there is a significant need for basic legislation, as well as a certain amount of institutional structures, and that a certain amount of progress has been made in resolving the problem of discrimination. However, it is emphasized that on a national level it is necessary to take measures to implement anti-discrimination provisions and the need is particularly pointed out for legislative adjustment in relation to alignment of the differing retirement ages for men and women in the police force, the army and the civil service.

In its progress report for 2005 (COM /2005/561) the European Commission concluded that non-discriminatory policies and gender equality policies in general had not received the necessary attention or that had not been dealt with in order to resolve them. In the Chapter on Economic and Social Rights, it is assessed that, despite the fact that the basic legislation exists, that a large number of legal adjustments were necessary to align it with the regulations of the EU, especially as part of alignment with the *acquis* in the field of social policy and employment. It is mentioned that the implementation of the existing provisions in this field are still problematic, and made more difficult by the lack of statistical indicators by gender. Here too the stance expressed in the Avis is repeated in a way, according to which; "In general it appears that Croatia has the necessary basic legislation in place to a large extent. Legal adjustments are necessary, however, e.g. in connection with the removal of over-protection of women in terms of night work, hard physical work, work below the ground and work in hypobaric conditions. Mention should also be made of the deficiencies in terms of maternity leave, maternity benefits and the excessive obligatory maternity leave as well as the general difficulties faced by pregnant women and mothers of small children in the field of employment. Further alignment regarding the differences in retirement ages for men and women in the police, military and civil services seem necessary. The implementation of the existing regulations is still problematic and is hindered by the lack of statistical indicators by gender. Legal provisions are needed prescribing prohibiting and deterring costs in cases of discrimination."

The general assessment by the EC is that the action plan for gender equality also received too little attention and more influence is expected from the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality from 2006 to 2010 on the implementation of equal opportunity policies.

Alignment with the *acquis* of the European Community in the field of equal opportunities for men and women is contained in Chapter 19, Social Policy and Employment, Chapter 22 – Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments and Chapter 23 – the Judiciary and Fundamental Human Rights. Due to the on going process of alignment of legislation which will continue over the next few years, we also give below an overview of directives, decisions, and other regulations to which the national legislation will need to be adjusted.

The Chapter on Social Policy and Employment contains units dealing with issues covering: equal pay, social security, equality in self-employment, health protection and safety for pregnant workers, maternity leave, occupational social insurance, the burden of proof in cases of gender discrimination, the Community Program for Gender Equality, employment opportunities, professional training, career advancement and working conditions and the possibility of receiving and delivery goods, or offering services:

1. Council Directive 75/117/EEC of 10 February 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women
2. Council Directive 79/7/EEC of 19 December 1978 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security
3. Council Directive 86/613/EEC of 11 December 1986 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood
4. Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC)
5. Council Directive 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC
6. Council Directive 96/97/EC of 20 December 1996 amending Directive 86/378/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes
7. Council Directive 97/80/EC of 15 December 1997 on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex
8. 2001/51/EC: Decision by the Council of 20 December 2000 launching a program in relation to the Framework Strategy for gender equality (2001–2005);
9. Decision no. 1554/2005/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 7 September 2005 amending Council Decision 2001/51/EC establishing a program relating to the Framework strategy of the Community on Gender Equality and Decision no. 848/2004/EC on establishing a Community action program to promote organizations active at European level in the field of equality between men and women;
10. Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (Text with EEA relevance)
11. Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services

A complete list of the European Union *acquis* relating to Chapter 19 Social Policy and Employment” may be found on EUR-Lex at: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/repert/index.htm> in Chapter 05.20 »Social policy «.

In Chapter 22 – Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments for alignment of legislation is related to:

1. Council Regulation 1083/2006/EC of 11 July 2006 containing the general provisions of the

European Fund for Regional Development, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, abolishing Regulation 1260/1999/EC.

Alignment of legislation in Chapter 23 – The Judicial System and Fundamental Human Rights is covered by the following conventions and protocols:

1. The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, supplemented by Protocol no. 11;
2. Protocol no. 4 of 1963 as a supplement to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
3. Protocol no. 6 of 1983. as a supplement to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in relation to abolition of the death penalty;
4. The UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (New York, 7 March 1966);
5. European Convention for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Strasbourg, 26 November 1987);
6. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (New York, 20 November 1989);
7. EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, OJ C 364 of 18 December 2000, p.1.

The Protocols which follow the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms: Protocol no. 7 of 1984, Protocol no. 12 of 2000, Protocol no. 13 of 2002.

Apart from these obligations in the field of equal opportunities on the basis of the pre-accession strategy of the European Union, the Republic of Croatia is obliged to draw up and sign the Joint Inclusion Memorandum – JIM in the course of 2007 and the document entitled the Joint Assessment Paper of Employment Policies – JAP.

These documents define the processes where, in the area of employment and social inclusion, with special reference to the improvement of the policies of gender equality, the governments of candidate countries for membership of the EU are jointly involved and their cooperation in the implementation and supervision of the goals continues after signing.

The goal of the creation and signing of the Joint Inclusion Memorandum, for which the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is responsible, and in whose creation the Office for Gender Equality is also involved, is to give the opportunity to signatory states for full participation in coordination in the field of social inclusion in the process of accession. The Joint Inclusion Memorandum defines the basic challenges in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Along with a presentation and assessment of the situation, the document contains a series of measures which Croatia needs to carry out in the process of implementing the goals of the European Union in its national policies. The basic ways of future monitoring and assessment of the agreed policies are identified. Progress will be assessed in the context of the process of social inclusion in the European Union, whose basic goal is to eliminate all forms of poverty in Europe by 2010.

The Joint Inclusion Memorandum defines the basic reasons for social exclusion, defines the sensitive groups, political challenges and, finally, ways leading to greater social inclusion of all the identified groups. The poverty and social exclusion suffered by women are emphasized in the fifth chapter aimed at introducing the concept of gender equality into all aspects of social, health care, macroeconomic and political sustainable, regional and balanced development.

The Joint Assessment document on employment policies is a strategic, orientation document for allocating financial assistance from the pre-accession instruments of the EU. This important document defines Croatian employment policies, in line with European standards and the principles of an active labour market. The emphasis on the status of women, as an especially socially sensitive group on the labour market, is an important contribution to the work on this document.

In Croatia strategic national programs have also been adopted which establish the goals and tasks in the accession process, and within which tasks are also defined in the field of improving gender equality.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia has adopted since 2003 a regular “National Program for the Integration of the Republic into the EU” within whose political criteria for 2006 the following priorities are emphasized in the field of gender equality:

- strengthening the administrative capabilities of the Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia to enable the more effective application of the Gender Equality Act and cooperation with international institutions;
- strengthening and networking of institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the policies of gender equality on a local and national level;
- harmonization of national legislation with the provisions of the Act on Gender Equality;
- adoption and implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010;
- implementation of the National Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence 2005-2007 and the Protocol on Action in Cases of Domestic Violence;
- an assessment of the alignment of the legislation of the RoC with the *acquis*;
- participation in the implementation of the Community Program for Gender Equality;
- the development of gender-disaggregated statistical indicators and publication of statistical data and
- implementation of the recommendations from the Concluding Documents of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Moreover, in the strategic document of the Government of the Republic of Croatia entitled “The Main Tasks of Bodies of State Administration in the Process of Accession to the EU, 2004-2007”, as a key measure in the improvement of the promotion of gender equality from the perspective of the demands and standards of the European Union in the given period, the basic goals and planned activities are emphasized, which cover:

1. Improvement of the entire system of protection and promotion of gender equality in the RoC:
 - influence the application of legal regulations, the implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality and develop a program to promote equal opportunities policies
 - systematically monitor and apply the regulations of the EU, the Council of Europe, and international documents in the field of gender equality,
 - strengthen cooperation on a vertical and horizontal level between the Office for Gender Equality, other bodies of state administration, the Office of the Ombudswoman for Gender Equality, the Parliamentary Committee for Gender Equality, and the Commissions for Gender Equality at a local level;
 - offer support and implement programs aimed at raising the general awareness and knowledge of issues of gender equality.
2. Introduce “gender mainstreaming” in all areas of national politics:
 - offer support to the economic empowering of women through development of programs to reduce unemployment, increase the proportion of women in business and remove all forms of discrimination against women on the labour market;

- promotion of balanced gender representation in the processes of political decision making, including legislative and administrative measures aimed at increasing the political participation of women;
- improving the keeping of statistical data in all fields of social and political life and their publication;
- introduce gender sensitive education into teaching plans and programs, remove gender stereotypes from textbooks and systematically promote the training of teaching staff on all levels;
- strengthen efforts to prevent all forms of violence against women, increase the number of shelter for victims of domestic violence, support research and spread of information on all forms of violence against women;
- continually cooperate with NGOs active in the field of gender equality, in order to strengthen the role and importance of the civil society.

The term “*gender mainstreaming*”, a key and comprehensive term in the implementation of the policies of gender equality in EU member states, which according to the Council of Europe definition means, “the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making..” This hard to translate concept, for which the phrase “gender aware policies” is also used in Croatia, is the conceptual foundation for the improvement of gender equality in the EU. It is operationalized by Articles 2 and 3 of the EU Treaty, as a contribution to eliminating inequality and the promotion of gender equality through all the activities of the Community, that is, it is defined in that “gender mainstreaming” means the inclusion of the goals of gender equality in all Community policies”

(http://ec.europa.eu/comm/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/general_overview_en.html).

The overall assessment of the European institutional policy of equality of men and women, which is completely applicable to the situation in Croatia, states, “Despite the positive and significant achievements in the field of equality between women and men, in both legislation and policy making, gender equality is still far from being a reality. Even if women have obtained de jure equal rights in the majority of European countries, they are still discriminated against in many areas”

([http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/PDF_MEG-6\(2006\)4_E.pdf](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/PDF_MEG-6(2006)4_E.pdf))

This assessment is also a foundational starting point for an analysis of the level of genuine equality achieved between men and women in the Republic of Croatia.

IV. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION

1. Legislative-institutional development and means of implementation

From the adoption of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality in 2001 up to the present day, the foundational institutional mechanisms have been created and important legislative changes introduced for the prevention of inequality of genders and promotion of policies of equal opportunities. The adoption of the Gender Equality Act at the end of July 2003, as the most important legal document aimed at eliminating gender discrimination, created the preconditions for the more effective implementation of gender equality policies. In the same year other “anti-discrimination” laws were also passed, such as the Act on Protection

Against Family Violence and the Act on Homosexual Unions, and in the field of criminal, family and labour law new anti-discrimination provisions have also been prescribed. Along with the Gender Equality Act, the Labour Act is the most important act containing provisions to prevent discrimination on the basis of gender in the field of work and employment.

To ensure the implementation of the Gender Equality Act, in accordance with its provisions, in October 2003 an ombudswoman for gender equality was appointed (cf www.prs.hr) and in 2004 the Office for Gender Equality was established (see: www.ured-ravnopravnost.hr) as the professional service of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for performing tasks related to gender equality. In 2004 coordinators were appointed in all ministries and other bodies of state administration as in all offices of state administration in the counties, who, in line with the scope of work of the body of state administration, cooperate with the Office for Gender Equality and are responsible for the implementation of the Act. The foundation of these institutions, along with the work of the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament since 2001, has completed the system of institutional mechanisms for implementation of the policy of gender equality at a state level. In 2004/05 the work of foundation continued along with education and establishment of a network of county commissions for gender equality. That is to say, although in the Action Program of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2001-2005 the establishment of a network of commissions and the development of their mutual cooperation was set as one of the priority tasks of the entire program, in most counties these commissions were not founded. At a conference of representatives of county commissions for gender equality entitled "Implementation of the policy of gender equality at a local level" (Pula 22-24 April 2005), held as the final part of the project "Realization of equal opportunities policies", run by the Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the NGO CESI – the Centre for Education and Counselling, from September 2004, a coordinating body was founded of county commissions for gender equality, with the aim of improving and harmonizing gender equality policies on a local level. It was also concluded that in the proposal of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality for 2006 to 2010 it was necessary to include provisions related to the role and goals, authority and scope of work of the county/local commissions for gender equality, and how they are to be founded and their financing. Today these commissions are active in almost all the counties and in a small number of towns and municipalities. In January 2005 the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women recognized with approval the development of the institutional system for the promotion of gender equality, not only at a state level but also at a local level.

In the overall process of promotion and implementation of the gender equality policies and empowering of women an important role is played by NGOs whose work and support of public policies sensitizes the public and plays a part in proposing and/or resolving individual problems. In recent times, they have made significant and obvious contributions to opening the public arena to issues of women's rights, the education of the public and institutions and proposing solutions for public policies and laws. The strengthening of the civil society is a long-term goal and important condition for educating the public in the field of women's rights and further improvement of systematic cooperation, coordination and partnership relationships between NGOs and state bodies and institutional mechanisms is extremely important on a national and local level in the area of the implementation of gender aware policies.

Finally, despite the fact that over the past few years political will is clearly aimed at

establishing an institutional framework and trying to include the principles of gender equality in various areas of national politics, the need is clear for further development and strengthening of the responsible bodies and cooperation with partner women's organizations for the more effective application of legislation and implementation of the goals and tasks of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

With the same aim, it is necessary to improve other important means to establish the planned standards in gender equality, and develop methods for collecting gender-disaggregated statistical data, undertaking research and gender analysis as well as including the perspective of gender equality in the process of planning, adopting and implementation of the budget. Although in many important areas of life, which give indications of the economic, social, cultural and political position of women in the Republic of Croatia, for many years statistics have been expressed in terms of gender, it is necessary to go on working on more effective collecting, processing and publication of gender specific statistical indicators, so that on the basis of exact and systematized data the conditions may be created for the implementation of a large number of measures. It is necessary to point out that in this area there have been positive moves. In the annual implementation plan for statistical activities in the Republic of Croatia for 2005 (Official Gazette, no. 58/05) the obligation is included of disaggregating statistical data by gender for a large number of new data. The Central Statistical Bureau began publishing a presentation of average monthly gross and net salaries of employees by gender from 2003 (Announcement 9.1.7 of 8th April 2005), and it has also printed publications of gender statistics "Women and Men in Croatia in 2006" due to the "increasing need of users for statistical indicators by gender to present the status of women and men in society". This year the Office for Gender Equality, by publishing a study by the European Women's Lobby "Budgeting towards Gender Equality" opened the subject of gender analysis of budget management, by which Croatia became involved at the right time in the discussion on this issue going on in most EU member countries.

2. Gender Equality: challenges and hindrances

The changes mentioned have not led to a level of development in the implementation of gender aware politics and democratization of society which would completely eliminate various forms of discrimination against women and establish a society of equal opportunities for both sexes.

Although they account for more than one half of the total population of the world, women do not participate in a balanced proportion in the processes of political decision making, nor do they have opportunities equally available for complete involvement in many other areas of social life, due to the various forms of social, political and economic hindrances they encounter.

The most important indicator of the unequal position of women is still found in their majority share in the total number of unemployed persons, various forms of discrimination in employment and professional advancement, under-representation in the political decision making process, and the frequency of domestic violence against women.

One of the most important goals in attaining full equality of men and women is the improvement of the status of women on the labour market in view of their difficulties in finding work and lower salaries, or sector segregation. Women are the majority in occupations such as the textile industry, catering and commercial services, education, public administration, social activities, social and personal services etc, with significantly lower salaries, for example in the textile industry. In contrast, in military occupations and the police, there are only about 5 % women. The employment rate for women is significantly lower than

the employment for men (45.1%). Of the total of administratively registered unemployed persons, women account for 59%, although the proportion of women in the total number of self-employed persons is growing (from 32.1% in 2002 to 40% in 2004). There are several factors responsible for the continuing rise in unemployment of women, including above all the resistance of employers against taking women who have or who could have obligations as mothers, but the reasons for the unemployment of women are also to be found in the high cost of child care, in view of the level of salaries. Moreover, for many families crèches and kindergartens are unavailable as they are overfull with long waiting lists. Research undertaken shows that women on average earn 20% less than men, and according to the official figures from the Central Bureau for Statistics for 2004, the percentage proportion of women's salaries of men's salaries was 89.5, or 456 kunas less than the average men's salary (the average net salary for a woman was 3885 kunas and for a man 4341 kunas). The proportion of women in business is not more than 30% and the number of women on management boards in the public and private sectors is also very low (in management positions in the 100 largest companies in the Republic of Croatia there are only 6% women). In order to strengthen women in business, the ministries, bodies of local government and NGOs are running programs to strengthen women in business and for the economic empowerment of women. One of the goals of the operational plan to encourage small and medium sized enterprises for 2006 includes the creation of the conditions for the quick inclusion of women, as a target group, the allocation of loan subsidies and, for example, of the total of requests received for financial support in 2005, the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship approved 256 requests, or 61.08% of the total of 419 requests sent by women in business. To this end, 2,893,788.00 kunas was allocated from the budget, where most of the projects approved were in the field of incentives for introduction of new technologies and the application of know-how in technological development. Women had a share of 27% in the total incentives given by the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship.

The process of harmonizing private and professional life is hindered by the need to remove the inequalities in the social positions of men and women. Less than 1% of men use paternity leave, although there is a slight increase in comparison with last year. In the same way there is not a sufficient number of child care and educational institutions and other social institutions which meet the needs and interests of the family with what they offer. However it should be mentioned here that the implementation of social policy measures has a major influence on the overall economic condition of the country.

In terms of equal treatment of women and men, the most important acts prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender related to employment and status on the labour market, are the Labour Act and the Gender Equality Act, according to which discrimination in the field of employment and work is prohibited in the public and private sectors. This relates to conditions of employment, career advancement, access to professional training, working conditions and membership and involvement in employees' and employers' associations. The scale of various forms of discrimination of women in the process of finding employment and at the work place is not proportional to the complaints and petitions received by the competent authorities. One of the causes of the small number of complaints received and processed is the lack of efficiency of the judiciary in the field of anti-discrimination provisions, and the declarative nature of the law which makes its application and the protection of rights impossible in specific situations. In this sense it is necessary to undertake further action in order to enlighten and acquaint women with the possibilities of legal protection contained in the national legislations.

Women are still under-represented in positions of authority on a national and local level and there is a noticeable smaller proportion of women in local representative and executive bodies in relation to their proportion in the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia. Although there is a clear gradual increase in the number of women political representatives, we cannot be satisfied with the dynamics of the growth. Since the first multi-party elections in 1990 until today the number of women in the Croatian Parliament increased from 4.6% through 7.1% in 1995 to stabilize after the elections in 2000 and 2003 at around 21%. Of the five vice-presidents of the Croatian Parliament, two are women, and the representation of women in the parliamentary working bodies/committees ranges from 12% women representatives who chair committees, through 28% vice-presidents, to 22.7% women as members of parliamentary committees. The largest increase in political involvement by women has occurred in positions of executive power at a state level: the proportion of women in the Government of the Republic of Croatia has moved from 10.5% in 2000, through 20% in 2002 to 29% in 2003 and 31% in 2005/2006. The number of women officials and high ranking state and public officials has also risen from 20% in 2000 to 26.5% in 2005, as has the number of women ambassadors, from 8% in 2000 to 15% in 2005.

The proportion of women who hold positions of authority on a local level is worryingly low – in Croatia there are only 11% women mayors, and the rise in the total number of women councillors after the local elections in May 2005 in comparison with 2001 followed the distribution shown below (where the average proportion of women councillors in 2001 was 11.5% and in 2005 12.9%).

Proportion of women members of county councils in %		
	2001	2005
Women members of county councils:	13.4	14.5
Women members of city/town councils:	14.0	15.7
Women members of municipal councils:	7.0	8.4

There is a noticeable and major imbalance in political participation by women in certain county councils, for example: from only 2.4% in the Šibensko-kninska county, 4.9% in the Varaždinska county, to 27% in the Istarska and Međimurska counties and the City of Zagreb (Source: Central Bureau for Statistics, 2006.)

Although in the Act on the Election of Members of Representative Bodies of Units of Local and Regional Self-government there is a provision in Article 15 by which the political parties as proposers of lists are obliged to take gender equality into account, and the Gender Equality Act also prescribes that all political parties are obliged to define methods for the promotion of balanced representation of women and men in the lists of candidates for elections to the bodies of units of local and regional self-government, the results of the research undertaken show without doubt that these regulations are not being applied and that no legal sanctions are prescribed for these violations. It is interesting that according to the Opinion of the Constitutional Court of the RoC the Article 15 mentioned above, “does not contain measures on the basis of which the existence of a violation could be established,” that is it means that “the application of the principle of gender equality will depend on the specific circumstances of each candidate list” (Decision U-VIIA/1895/2005). However, according to the recommendations of the EU and the Council of Europe it is clear what is understood by implementation of the principle of gender equality and balanced participation of women and men. This means that the proportion of either women or men in any decision making body in political or public life must not fall below 40%. The legal provisions mentioned as well as the measures of positive action by which political parties are given 10% more funding for the

under-represented gender (Political Parties Act), have not led to the expected results and it is necessary to introduce the kind of measures and provisions which will ensure the application of the articles of the regulations mentioned above.

On the other hand we are faced with the over-representation of women in the judicial power. In most first instance courts in the Republic of Croatia, women are in the majority: they account for about 65% of the total number of municipal court judges, 54% of commercial judges, and 74% of misdemeanour judges. Women constitute a majority at the Administrative Court of the RoC (71%) and at the High Misdemeanour Court (62%). At the Supreme Court of the RoC there are 50% women, in the Constitutional Court, 30.8%. The proportion of women lawyers also indicates the continuation of the trend of feminization of judicial functions.

According to the report on the status of women's human rights in 2005 by The Women's Network Croatia (*Ženska mreža Hrvatske*, see: www.zenska-mreza.hr) the greatest violations of women's human rights go on in the system of education and up-bringing, due to the lack of sex education and education on gender equality as well as the discriminatory content and stereotypes in school textbooks, whilst positive moves have taken place in the field of protection from violence against women with the adoption and the beginning of the implementation of the National Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence for 2005 to 2007, and the Protocol for Action in Cases of Domestic Violence.

Although from the statistical indicators it appears that there is no gender discrepancy/discrimination regarding the approach to education, in the area of educational content there are still today traditional stereotypes regarding the gender roles of men and women present.

Figures indicate that there is an equal proportion of girls and boys in elementary and high schools, but at enrolment in university there are more girls (54% of the total enrolled students). In 2004 women accounted for 59.7% of the total of university graduates with an extremely low proportion in the field of computing (20.4%), and engineering (9.8%) (Source: Central Bureau for Statistics, 2006). There are differences regarding the choice of high school and faculties, which is still reflected in the existing division of work into male and female occupations, since the female part of the population tends more, for instance to choose social and humanist sciences (the Arts). In technical sciences women are in the minority, although over the past few years a rise has been recorded in the number of female students enrolled. In order to ease the consequences of this division, already in the choice of occupation, or enrolment in high school and at university and further education, it would be useful at enrolment in trade schools, colleges and institutes of further education and for various courses for re-qualification, additional qualifications or other types of professional training, to give priority to the under-represented gender in relation to candidates who meet the conditions to the same extent. Here objective criteria should be borne in mind applicable for the type of professional the candidate has chosen. The realization of these measures is also prescribed in the Gender Equality Act. In line with the Lisbon declaration, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has included in its program goals for 2010 an increase in the number of graduate experts (both men and women) in the field of mathematics, science and technology, and especially an increase in the proportion of women in those professions.

Since the need to introduce gender sensitive education into teaching plans and programs has been detected as a national priority in the field of education, along with the removal of gender stereotypes and the education of child care workers and teaching staff in gender equality, it is necessary to speed up the introduction of specific measures in order to attain these goals.

Article 3 of the Act on Textbooks for Elementary and High Schools prescribes that a textbook will not be approved for use if its contents are contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia or unsuitable regarding human and minority rights, fundamental freedoms and relationships between the sexes, and education for a democratic society. It is important to emphasise that it is also necessary to align the other laws in the field of elementary education with the Gender Equality Act.

From the previous National Policy, the measure was not realized regarding the integration of women's studies at universities at the level of under-graduate, graduate and post-graduate studies (although there is a tendency for their importance to be recognized and gender sensitive courses at certain faculties to be introduced), so in the coming period it is important to begin founding these courses, so that in this area too Croatia would grow nearer the standards of European and world universities.

Although women account for as much as 64% of the teaching staff in high schools, their unequal representation in school management positions is noticeable, so there are only 33% women principals. The proportion of women in the teaching staff at further education colleges has risen from 37.25% in 2001/2002 to 42% in 2004/2005. Regarding the attainment of Master's degrees, the proportion of women is 47%, and for PhDs 42% (Source: Central Bureau for Statistics, 2006).

More serious forms of violations of women's human rights are found in various forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, trafficking and exploitation of women for prostitution.

Statistical indicators still show a rise in the number of reported criminal and misdemeanour offences in the field of domestic violence. Although the increase is certainly also the result of the increasing number of reports, which is a positive trend, it also indicates the importance of this social problem and the need for further regulation of the field.

With the adoption of the National Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence, for 2005 to 2007, and the Protocol on Action in Cases of Domestic Violence, in whose creation women representatives of the civil sector were also involved, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted a series of measures to prevent various forms of domestic violence, of which the following were stressed: in all competent bodies the obligation is introduced for research, prevention and processing of all forms of domestic violence, preventive action, offering assistance and information about the issue of domestic violence in line with the adopted Recommendation 1681 (2004) of the Parliamentary Assembly on proclaiming 2006 the year of a pan-European campaign against domestic violence and providing for a systematic and planned fight against domestic violence and a contribution to the realization of gender equality policies, as well as cooperation with NGOs whose work involves protection of victims of violence.

To date in the implementation of the strategy, for which the Ministry of the Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity is responsible, an analysis has been written of laws which punish domestic violence, with their alignment with the basic international regulations, and amendments are proposed to the existing acts dealing with domestic violence. This relates to the Penal Code, the Juvenile Courts Act, the Misdemeanour Act and the Police Act. Proposals for amendments and supplements have been drawn up of the Act on Protection Against Domestic Violence and the Regulations on the necessary criteria for the founding and work of shelters for women and children who are victims of domestic violence. An address list has been printed and distributed of all institutions, organizations and other bodies offering assistance, support and protection to victims of domestic violence, as well as an informative leaflet aimed at victims of violence. An analysis has been undertaken of shelters for women

and children who are victims of domestic violence, with a proposal of measures to improve the situation and open new shelters and set up a shelter network. All court cases related to domestic violence are marked urgent so they have priority.

Programs have also been drawn up for psycho-social treatment of the perpetrators of domestic violence, programs to empower and train victims for economic independence and employment programs for women who are victims of domestic violence. That is to say, for the creation of a program of psycho-social therapy for perpetrators of domestic violence, standards have been drawn up for the implementation of psycho-social therapy for perpetrators of domestic violence, which is an integral part of the Regulations, on the manner and location of psycho-social therapy. In order to realize the measure by which the responsible bodies undertake to draw up programs to empower and trains victims to attain economic independence, and programs of employment for women who are victims of domestic violence, a National Action Plan of Employment for 2006 has been written by the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship. It includes the prescribed measure “Co-financing of target groups with aggravating employment factors” such as unemployed single parents of young children, women who are victims of violence, victims of trafficking in human beings, asylum seekers, unemployed Homeland War veterans who have been on the records of the Croatian Employment Service for at least six months, children and marriage partners of fallen or missing Homeland War veterans and others, for which the Croatian Employment Service is responsible.

In view of the continuing growth in domestic violence, the role is important of long-term planned measures which require the removal of prejudice and stereotypes of domestic violence, especially taking into account the media and school programs and ensuring the availability of information on the issue of domestic violence, especially to sensitive groups, creating forms of public action to mark dates related to promoting human rights and improving the status of victims of domestic violence etc.

In 2004 the Government of the Republic of Croatia proclaimed 22nd September the National Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which like the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, is regularly marked by a large number of activities. It is necessary to emphasize here the contribution of informing the public about violence against women, undertaken by women’s NGOs as part of the program “16 days of activism against violence against women”, and many other campaigns aimed at founding and running shelters for women and children who are victims of violence, legal advisory centres, SOS telephone lines etc.

In 2003 the Autonomous Women’s House, Zagreb undertook research entitled: “The Economic Aspects of Domestic Violence; the social cost of ignoring and tolerating violence against women” to gain clear insight into all aspects of the problem of domestic violence in the Republic of Croatia. The analysis of data on the extent of physical abuse mentions that only 59% women have never experienced physical abuse from their marital/extra-marital partners.

Trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes is the most common form of criminal offence in the trafficking of human beings and one of the most serious violations of women’s rights related to the general status of women in society, especially regarding the issues of poverty, unemployment and violence with which they are faced. In taking action to prevent trafficking in human beings, the Republic of Croatia signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the appending Protocols: the Protocol for the Prevention, Suppression and Punishment of Trafficking in Human Beings, especially Women and Children; and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. The Government of the Republic of Croatia has begun to built a comprehensive system for suppression of these criminal offences by developing a national mechanism for prevention of

trafficking in human beings and strengthening international cooperation, and in 2002 the National Committee for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings was founded and the first National Plan for Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings adopted. After that the National Program was adopted for 2005 to 2008, with operational plans for each year. The Amendments and Supplements to the Penal Code (2004) introduced a separate criminal offence “Trafficking in human beings and slavery” and thereby creating a firm legal framework for the prosecution of perpetrators of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings and offering the appropriate assistance and protection to victims of trafficking in human beings. According to figures from the National Committee for Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings since 2002 a total of 47 victims of trafficking in human beings have been identified in the RoC, most often women who were offered psycho-social, health care and legal assistance, and accommodation in an official shelter or in equipped and suitable institutions with alternative secure accommodation. In order to inform the public about this problem, the National Committee for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, conducted a broad public campaign, as part of which an SOS telephone line was launched. Assistance and protection of victims is given through the formation and training of mobile teams of experts, reception and care of victims, and accommodation in reception centres/shelters. The former Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare monitored the implementation of the three-year Program of Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human beings for sexual exploitation, and NGOs were also included in this program (the Centre for Women Victims of War, Zagreb, the Rosa Women’s Centre, The Karlovac Women’s Group “Step” (Korak) etc). The shelters were officially founded under the jurisdiction of the then Minister of Labour and Social Welfare in July 2003, and three reception centres have been established in various regions of Croatia.

The status of women who are members of national minorities, especially Roma women, is still not sufficiently researched and so still, as a long-term task, there remains the removal of their social marginalization and the gathering and analysis of statistical indicators on their status regarding education, employment, health care, housing and participation in public and political life.

It is also necessary to conduct a campaign to raise public awareness of the needs of disabled women as well as other vulnerable groups such as returnee women, and support for the work of women’s NGOs in areas of special state concern. It is also necessary to conduct research on the social status of village women. The fact that women are the owners of agricultural land in only 14% of cases is indicative (Source: Central Bureau for Statistics, 2006).

In the recent period, there has been a positive move regarding the improvement of women’s health care and prevention of a certain number of diseases. The National Program for prevention and Early Detection of Cancer in Croatia was adopted in 2005. The number of papa smear tests undertaken is growing and indicates an increased awareness and care by women for their own health. Croatia has a relatively stable epidemiological trend of growth of cases of HIV infection. In 2004 there were 59 newly infected persons, and of 273 HIV/AIDS patients who are presently being treated in Croatia, 56 (20.6%) are women. Thanks to the many years of effort in primary and secondary prevention and the National Program for Prevention of HIV/AIDS for 2005-2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) assesses the risk of an outbreak of infection as moderate. However, along with the constant lack of statistical indicators (the exact number of mammographies performed, the number of means used for prevention of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases etc.) there is still a clear lack of development in some areas of health care of women (occupational health

care, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, sexual and mental health of women), and the concept of continuous and accessible health care cannot be achieved with the existing bad vertical connections between primary health care offered by general medicine and emergency medical aid, and secondary and tertiary health care offered by hospitals and polyclinics. The National Health Care Strategy for 2006 to 2011 plans to reform the system and its financing. The basic goal is to train teams of primary health care for quality and effective resolution of up to 80% of all the health problems of the population.

In the health care of women antenatal care and care of new mothers is specially monitored. Visits to primary health care services for family planning in the Republic of Croatia are still very rare. Only a little less than 9% women of child-bearing age visit their gynaecologist for counselling regarding family planning, and a similar percentage (8.3%) come for a prescription for some form of contraception. Maintenance and improvement of reproductive health is achieved through educational courses on family planning and maintenance of reproductive health, which are defined in the program of health care for school children and young people. The activities include the formation of advice centres with a standardized single format national program, and classes for pregnant women. In 2003 10,999 abortions were registered, which is a further fall in relation to the previous year (9.2% less than a year before), although the Women's Network Croatia supports the view that this actually represents a move into the realm of the "grey economy".

Measures of health care for older women are offered through preventive gerontological programs. The continuing rise in the number of women suffering and dying from breast cancer is worrying. For the early detection of malign diseases, in July 2005 the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare published and distributed educational booklets to primary health care services and public health institutes entitled "Early Detection of Breast Cancer" and "Cancer of the Colon – early detection saves lives" aimed at the general population, and various forms of preventive activities are being run by some units of local self-government.

From an analysis of the status of the general social position of women it arises that the imbalance in the distribution of economic and political power, the stereotypes in educational materials and discrimination on the labour market are still barriers for women, which limit their choice of career and prevent them moving forward at the same speed as men and earning the same salaries for the same work. The significant gender differences which exist in this region deny women and girls equal opportunities in participation in and creating the kind of social development in which they could make complete use of their potential.

The media have a very important role in forming public opinion and in that way influence the creation and maintenance of gender stereotypes. The media image of women does not correspond with the real status of women in society, nor their many roles. The media often, although they have a legal obligation to promote gender equality programming, do not hold to the prescribed legal provisions. According to the Media Act, which was aligned with the Gender Equality Act in 2004, the media has the obligation to promote the production and publication of program content which will develop awareness of the equality of men and women, and it is forbidden to advertise content where women and men are shown in a demeaning, disparaging or humiliating manner.

The women's NGOs (*Ženska infoteka*, *Centar za ženske studije*, *B.a.B.e.*) have undertaken research on discrimination of women and the way they are presented in the media. The results of this research indicate that "The Acts regulating the work of the media, and especially the

Media Act, are written in such a way to place the media in a privileged position and they do not establish any of the necessary measures to protect the public from the media. The Research showed that sensationalism and unethical behaviour are the main characteristics of the Croatian media, but neither in legislation nor in the ethical codes of individual professional organizations is there any adequate response to this problem” (see: The Eqviwa Project – increasing the visibility of women in the media – an Analysis of the Legislation of the Republic of Croatia, (*Projekt Eqviwa – Povećanje vidljivosti žena u medijima: Analiza zakonodavstva Republike Hrvatske*), Lovorka Kušan, B.a.B.e., 2005)

The analyses also show that the media in Croatia have no gender-mainstreaming policy, that the portrayal of women is sexist, that there is no awareness of gender democracy, confirming the inequality of the sexes both in quality and quantity of presentation of women and men, indicating the almost identical proportion of women in the media content of ideologically different daily newspapers (see: B.a.be (2006) Innocence without protection: a “female” perspective of media content (*Nevinost bez zaštite: »ženska« percepcija medijskih sadržaja*) by Suzana Kunac and Sanja Sarnavka).

Stereotypes regarding gender roles are still today very widely accepted in Croatian culture and everyday life, and, mediated through education and the media, they form a strong barrier to achieving genuine equality between women and men.

A great deal of research indicates the structural causes of gender inequality and the need for long-term creation of a strategy to remove them. According to a study conducted by the Centre for Women’s Studies, the difficulties in the implementation of gender-mainstreaming policies arise from a series of not only political and institutional hindrances but also those arising from world view, education and other general social causes, including poor awareness of the importance of gender equality for the good of society and the democratic process (See: B. Kašić, J. Marijan, J. Pešut (2005.) A Guide towards Gender Equality Policies *Vodič prema politici rodne jednakosti*).

We also refer to the Reports on the work of the Ombudswoman for gender equality for 2004 and 2005. (www.prs.hr).

V. THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY POLICY AND THE ACTION PLAN

Implementing a gender equality policy in practice requires a combination of measures and special actions and the adoption of new legislation and the evaluation of the existing legislation, other programmes and policies, with a view to achieving more rapid and efficient progress in eliminating gender discrimination.

Implementation of measures of the National Policy is the responsibility of implementing subjects and co-subjects. Coordination of activities and joint planning of implementation of particular measures is entrusted to the body or institution which is mentioned first on the list of implementing subjects. Measures are also implemented through cooperation with civil society organisations.

The strategic framework and the action plan contain action goals and measures for their implementation for the following basic programme areas: human rights of women, equal opportunities on the labour market, gender-sensitive education, equality in decision-making,

violence against women, women's health and institutional mechanisms and implementation arrangements

1. Human rights of women

To continue enhancing human rights of women and preventing violations of these rights, it is necessary to speed up the processes underlying their promotion and protection and, in particular, by: consistent implementation of all international instruments for the protection of human rights, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; development of methods for collecting and processing statistical data on the position of women belonging to national minorities and women with disabilities with a view to elaborating measures for their efficient integration in society as a whole; elimination of discrimination of Roma women, both in society in general and within their communities, and implementation of awareness-raising activities and programmes relating to respect of their human rights; providing women with access to justice and legal protection in case of violation of their rights and developing the methodology for collecting data on the number and types of lawsuits for gender discrimination filed with courts and of other complaint mechanisms; making it possible to implement anti-discrimination legislation and carrying out on-going assessments of its impact, quality and the degree of applicability, as well as conducting on-going and systematic campaigns aimed at eliminating all forms of gender-based discrimination and raising public awareness of diverse violations of human rights of women.

1.1. Enhance human rights of women by consistent implementation of international instruments for their protection

1.1.1. The national legislation will be harmonised with regulations under Chapter 23 of the *acquis communautaire*: Judiciary and fundamental human rights.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, competent state administration bodies, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.1.2. International and national documents on human rights of women, including recommendations by the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, will be disseminated to extend knowledge and raise awareness of the gender equality policy.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, gender equality coordinators in state administration bodies, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.1.3. Analysis will be carried out of harmonisation of the national legislation, policies and programmes with international documents in the field of gender equality and of their application.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Office for Human Rights, gender equality coordinators in state administration bodies, the Committee for Human Rights of the Croatian Parliament, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.1.4. Consideration will be given to ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

Implementing subjects: competent state administration bodies, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament
Time frame for implementation: 2009

1.1.5. The Republic of Croatia will accede to, and participate in Community programmes Gender Equality and PROGRESS (2007-2013) for implementation and promotion of the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, competent state administration bodies, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.2. Conduct on-going and systematic campaigns aimed at eliminating all forms of gender discrimination and raise public awareness of violations of human rights of women

1.2.1. Funding will be provided for activities and projects of non-governmental organisations targeted at raising public awareness of human rights of women

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Office for Human Rights, the Office for NGOs, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.2.2. A Glossary of Gender Terminology and EU Standards will be compiled and distributed to functionaries at national and local levels.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006

1.2.3. The International Women's Day, 8 March, will be regularly observed.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Parliament, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Office for Gender Equality, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.2.4. The World Rural Women's Day, 15 October, will be regularly observed.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the Office for Gender Equality, county/local gender equality commissions, local and regional self-government units, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.3. Improve the social position of women belonging to national minorities and women with disabilities

1.3.1. A working group will be established to collect information on women belonging to national minorities and a programme of action for the improvement of their position will be drawn up.

Implementing subjects: the Office for National Minorities, the Office for Gender Equality, the Committee for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Croatian Parliament, the Central Bureau of Statistics, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

1.3.2. Public forums will be held on the position and role of women belonging to national minorities in society.

Implementing subjects: the Office for National Minorities, the Office for Gender Equality, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs
Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.3.3. Empirical research will be carried out into the position of women with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare/the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Fund for Occupational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, the Office for Gender Equality, the Commission for Persons with Disabilities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, in cooperation with the Union of Federations of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities of Croatia and other national federations of organisations of persons with disabilities.

Time frame for implementation: 2008

1.3.4. In financing projects of women's non-governmental organisations special account will be taken of projects aimed at improving the position of women with disabilities.

Implementing subjects: the Office for NGOs, the Office for Gender Equality, the Office for Human Rights, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.3.5. A programme of action aimed at informing women with disabilities about their human rights will be drawn up, and civil service departments, support services and the general public will be informed and educated about problems facing women with disabilities.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Human Rights, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Office for Gender Equality, the Commission for Persons with Disabilities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, in cooperation with the Union of Federations of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities of Croatia and other national federations of organisations of persons with disabilities

Time frame for implementation: 2007

1.4. Eliminate discrimination of Roma women, both in society in general and within their communities, and undertake activities and programmes aimed at raising awareness of respect of their human rights and monitor/analyse the position of Roma women to assess the impact of policy and programme measures

1.4.1. The implementation of measures of the National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for "Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015" will be systematically monitored, to improve living conditions and social integration of Roma women

Implementing subjects: the Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Programme for the Roma, the Office for National Minorities

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.4.2. A research project entitled "Employment of Members of the Roma National Minority in the Republic of Croatia, with Special Emphasis on Employment of Roma Women: Evaluation of the Current Situation, Assessment of Needs and Recommendations" will be carried out.

Implementing subject: the Office for National Minorities

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

1.4.3. An international conference on the improvement of the position of Roma women will be organised.

Implementing subject: the Office for National Minorities

Time frame for implementation: 2007

1.4.4. A working group will be established to enhance the collection of statistical data on the position of Roma women in local community and society as a whole, as regards education, employment, health care and their participation in public and political life.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Office for National Minorities, the Office for Human Rights, the Central Bureau of Statistics, the Croatian Employment Service, competent state administration bodies, in cooperation with organisations of Roma women

Time frame for implementation: 2006

1.4.5. Support will be provided for cooperation of organisations of Roma women with other non-governmental organisations, representatives of state administration and local and regional self-government units, by jointly organising forums, round tables and conferences, with a view to exchanging experiences and encouraging Roma women to take part in resolving problems in their local communities.

Implementing subjects: the Office for National Minorities, competent state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units, in cooperation with NGOs and organisations of Roma women

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.4.6. The number of scholarships and grants for secondary and university education of Roma women will be increased.

Implementing subject: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, universities

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.4.7. An analysis and plan for employment of Roma women will be made on the basis of the estimated number of unemployed women belonging to the Roma national minority.

Implementing subject: the Croatian Employment Service

Time frame for implementation: 2007

1.5. Improve the methods for suppressing and eliminating discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation

1.5.1. A research will be carried out to analyse the case law and police conduct in criminal offences motivated by sexual orientation of the victim.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior

Time frame for implementation: 2007

1.5.2. Representatives of organisations for equality of sexual and gender minorities will be included in working bodies responsible for adoption of laws, programmes and strategies related to rights of sexual minorities.

Implementing subjects: competent state administration bodies, the Government of the Republic of Croatia

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

1.6. Improve access to justice and legal protection for women in case of violation of their rights and develop the methodology for collecting data on the number and types of

lawsuits for discrimination filed with courts and of other complaint mechanisms, and on their outcome; undertake activities aimed at raising women's awareness of the use of legal protection mechanisms

1.6.1. Statistics will be kept on the number and types of lawsuits for gender discrimination filed with courts and of other complaint mechanisms and analysis of access to justice and legal protection will be carried out.

Implementing subjects: the Central Bureau of Statistics, courts, the Ministry of Justice, the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.6.2. Activities (forums, conferences, round tables) will be undertaken to raise women's awareness of the existing legal protection mechanisms in case of discrimination, to encourage them to use these mechanisms more frequently.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of Justice, competent state administration bodies, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.7. Provide for implementation of anti-discrimination legislation and assess its impact, quality and degree of applicability of certain statutory provisions and other regulations

1.7.1. The impact of implementation of anti-discrimination laws will be monitored to increase the degree of their applicability by defining and proposing necessary amendments and strengthening their further implementation aimed at combating gender discrimination.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, competent state administration bodies, gender equality coordinators in state administration bodies, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

1.7.2. A survey will be carried out into the degree to which judges, public prosecutors, public prosecution staff and representatives of county and local institutional mechanisms are familiar with mechanisms of legal protection and promotion of human rights of women and anti-discrimination measures, which will enable making training plans.

Implementing subjects: the Judicial Academy, the Ministry of Justice, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

1.8. Achieve integration of the gender perspective into the national security policy and promote the application of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and commitments arising from the Beijing Platform.

1.8.1. Data on the role of women in war hardships, their contribution to peace-building, the consequences of war on the woman population in the Republic of Croatia will be systematically collected and analysed, and the ensuing results and recommendations will be integrated into the social and development policies, while respecting the diversity of needs of men and women in war and post-war time.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2008

1.8.2. Female experts on gender issues will be included in political activities related to peace-building, regional cooperation and national security.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior
Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

1.8.3. Training programmes for members of security forces will be reviewed from the perspective of gender equality and human rights of women.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior, the Security and Intelligence Agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Croatian Military College, the Police Academy
Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

1.8.4. Representation of women in the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia will be increased, with special emphasis on increasing their representation in managerial positions.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia
Time frame for implementation 2007-2010

2. Equal opportunities on the labour market

Employment of women remains the key to their economic independence and greater equality between women and men in the whole society. Dealing with the issue of the position of women on the labour market, especially as regards difficulties they meet in finding employment and lower salaries they earn, requires a multi-faceted approach. The Economic and Social Council has adopted some additional guidelines for improving the position of women on the labour market and reducing their unemployment rate.

The reduction of female unemployment rate, together with their economic empowerment and elimination of all other forms of discrimination on the labour market, is part of the programme for implementation of the National Policy and one of the most important tasks in achieving genuine equality of men and women.

2.1. Harmonise the national legislation with the *acquis communautaire* under Chapter 19 – Social Policy and Employment, in the field of equal opportunities

2.1.1. The national legislation will be harmonised with the *acquis communautaire* under Chapter 19 – Social Policy and Employment, in the field of equal opportunities, by the adoption and implementation of the Harmonisation Action Plan for Chapter 19.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, competent state administration bodies, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2010

2.2. Reduce unemployment and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women on the labour market

2.2.1. An empirical study entitled "Identifying Discrimination Standards in the Employment of Women" will be carried out and a code on employment of women in companies and interest organisations will be adopted.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Employment Service, the State Inspectorate, in cooperation with trade unions, the Croatian Employers' Association, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.2.2. The National Classification of Occupations (*Narodne novine*, no. 111/98) will be harmonised with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the Gender Equality Act in that all occupations, both those individually listed and their branches, types, subgroups and groups, will have both a female and a male form.

Implementing subjects: the Central Bureau of Statistics, the Office for Gender Equality, competent state administration bodies

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.2.3. Statistical data on gender differences in the social security system and on the labour market will be systematically collected and indicators of these differences will be consolidated, and quarterly indicators included in the annual report by the Croatian Employment Service will be prepared. Gender disaggregated data will be regularly published and disseminated.

Implementing subjects: the Central Bureau of Statistics, the Croatian Employment Service, the Office for Gender Equality, the State Inspectorate

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.2.4. Work will begin on drafting a governmental decree on the job classification for civil servants, which will prescribe the use of the feminine and masculine gender in the terminology relating to civil servants and their occupations.

Implementing subject: the Central State Office for Administration, the Government of the Republic of Croatia

Time frame for implementation: 2006

2.2.5. Subsidies will be provided for employment of target groups of unemployed women according to the National Employment Action Plan for the period from 2005 to 2008 and annual employment promotion plans for the years 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Employment Service, competent state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2008

2.2.6. A programme for the economic empowerment of single parents will be developed.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Croatian Employment Service, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.2.7. Employers will be provided with training in the advantages of hiring staff under flexible working hours arrangements.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Employment Service, the Croatian Employers' Association, in cooperation with trade unions and NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

2.2.8. Courses, seminars and education programmes will be organised for young women and women, especially for those who have been unemployed for more than 3 years, which will train them for finding, selecting and obtaining an appropriate employment and will include re-training and self-employment; the participation in these education programmes will be mandatory.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Employment Service, internet portals/job banks, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.2.9. A national campaign will be launched to promote geographical mobility of the labour force, accompanied by the elaboration of incentive measures for accepting a job outside one's place of residence.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship/competent state administration bodies

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.2.10. A secondary analysis will be carried out of the existing research results and funding will be provided for new surveys aimed at assessing the position, awareness, behaviour patterns and needs of rural women and an action plan will be drawn up based on the results of these scientific analyses.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2008

2.3. Empower women's entrepreneurship

2.3.1. A strategy for the development of women's entrepreneurship in the period from 2007 to 2010 will be adopted.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Employers' Association, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.3.2. Women will be singled out as a separate target group in the Operational Plan for the Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises for the current year, and funds will be provided and increased specifically for financing women entrepreneurial activities.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.3.3. Consideration will be given to introducing tax exemptions for self-employed women and women entrepreneurs, women employed in agricultural activities and trades and crafts.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship

Time frame for implementation: 2008-2010

2.3.4. An integral database on women's entrepreneurship will be established and made accessible through internet pages of the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, and the internet portal www.poduzetna.hr will be regularly updated.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, the Central Bureau of Statistics, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

2.3.5. Women's entrepreneurship will be systematically promoted through media campaigns, programmes and training in entrepreneurship for women, provision of assistance in terms of organisation, financing and premises and of other assistance, especially in relation to traditional trades and crafts activities.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Agency for Small Business, local and regional self-government units, entrepreneurship centres and incubators, the Croatian Employment Service, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, the Croatian Employers' Association, in cooperation with trade unions, the Office for Gender Equality, the Croatian Radio and Television, internet portals/job banks, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.3.6. The World Women's Entrepreneurs Day, 17 May, will be regularly observed.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.4. Ensure genuine equal opportunities for women and men on the labour market by effective implementation of the labour legislation and by encouraging women to use the existing complaint mechanisms when discriminated against on the labour market

2.4.1. Information will be provided to women and men about their rights and options with regard to filing complaints in case of gender discrimination and other forms of discrimination on the labour market, and they will be directly encouraged them to use the existing complaint mechanisms in case of violation of the gender equality principle in the field of employment and work.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of Justice, county/local gender equality commissions, local and regional self-government units, Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Employment Service, internet portals/job banks, the media, in cooperation with NGOs and trade unions

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.4.2. Statistical data on cases of gender discrimination in employment and work, disaggregated by sex, will be systematically collected.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, the Central Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the judiciary, in cooperation with trade unions, internet portals/job banks

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.4.3. Provision will be made for urgent initiation and conduct of proceedings, and for effective and timely redress in cases of gender discrimination in employment and/or at the workplace, in accordance with the provisions of the Labour Act and the Gender Equality Act.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, the judiciary

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.5. Strengthen and promote measures enabling harmonisation of family and professional responsibilities, including those raising awareness of equal sharing of household work and family responsibilities between men and women

2.5.1. Media campaigns will be conducted to promote equal sharing of household work and family responsibilities and equal distribution of parental responsibilities for the care of children, including the promotion of use of parental leave by fathers to ensure more active

participation of women in the labour force and increase the number of fathers taking parental leave.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

2.5.2. Plans will be made for launching new child care pre-school programmes and support services for various user groups to harmonise material and **staff-related** conditions in the community with the need for pre-school programmes and various public services.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports/local and regional self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.5.3. Working hours of child care services and kindergartens and other legal entities providing care and education for pre-school children will be harmonised with working hours of their parents.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, local and regional self-government units, county/local gender equality commissions, kindergartens and other legal entities implementing programmes for pre-school children

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.5.4. Self-employment will be encouraged in the field of child care and education by creating legal, organisational, premises-related and other presuppositions for the establishment of privately-owned infant nurseries and kindergartens.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, local and regional self-government units, the Croatian Agency for Small Business, the Fund for Development and Employment

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.5.5. An initiative will be launched to organise child care services for pre-school children of employees of publicly- and privately-owned companies and business organisations.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports/local and regional self-government units, the Croatian Employers' Associations, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, companies, in cooperation with trade unions

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

2.5.6. Consideration will be given to introducing tax exemptions by amendments to the Profit Tax Act for organisation of child care and education services in companies and business organisations for pre-school children of their employees, depending on the investments made and organisational costs incurred by companies

Implementing subject: the Ministry of Finance

Time frame for implementation: 2008

3. Gender-sensitive education

As no gender gap exists in access to education, the national priority is to introduce gender-sensitive education at all levels and implement the provisions of the Gender Equality Act.

3.1. Introduce gender-sensitive child care and education in the entire educational system and eliminate gender stereotypes in textbooks and teaching plans and curricula, and provide systematic training in gender equality for those responsible for the educational process at all levels of the system.

3.1.1. Textbook Standards will be drawn up according to the requirements from the Gender Equality Act

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2006

3.1.2. In accordance with the Textbooks for Elementary and Secondary School Act, documents for the implementation of the Textbook Standards will be drawn up, in line with the Gender Equality Act.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

3.1.3. An expert working group will be established, which will be responsible for drawing up programmes for upgrading and training in gender equality for those responsible for educational activities.

Implementing subjects: the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Vocational Education Agency, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

3.1.4. Systematic education and further training in gender equality will be organised and implemented for all those responsible for educational activities.

Implementing subjects: the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Vocational Education Agency, the Office for Gender Equality, universities, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

3.1.5. Experts on gender equality will actively participate in expert commissions for drafting regulations and other acts falling within the competence of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

3.1.6. Following gender equality principles, linguistic standards will be introduced for school-leaving certificates, attestations, licences and diplomas according to which professional titles, professions and occupations in these documents should reflect the gender of their recipients.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Council for Standard Croatian Language Norm, the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2008-2009

3.2. Achieve gender balance in choosing a particular field of education in secondary schools and higher education institutions

3.2.1. Vocational education will be harmonised with the results of the analysis of labour market needs and balanced representation of both sexes will be systematically promoted in enrolment in secondary schools.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Vocational Education Agency, the Croatian Employment Service

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

3.2.2. A special, gender-sensitive vocational guidance programme will be drawn up for students.

Implementing subjects: the Vocational Education Agency, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

3.2.3. Special emphasis will be laid on encouraging interested female students to enrol in elective programmes of information technology/computing, biology, physics, chemistry and/or mathematics, whereas male students interested in traditionally "female fields of study", for instance, mother tongue and foreign languages, visual and music culture/arts will be encouraged to enrol in them.

Implementing subject: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

Time frame for implementation: 2008-2010

3.3. Provide for the acquisition of knowledge of gender equality at the academic level and promote scientific research aimed at taking stock of the situation, monitoring the implementation of the gender equality policy and appraising its impacts at all levels of public and private life

3.3.1. A database of the existing courses in women's and gender studies at colleges will be set up.

Implementing subjects: universities, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

Time frame for implementation: 2008

3.3.2. Special programmes with women's studies content will be introduced in undergraduate, graduate, professional and post-graduate studies.

Implementing subjects: universities, colleges, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the National Council for Higher Education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2008-2009

3.3.3. Women's studies will be institutionalised at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels, pursuant to the Scientific Activities and Higher Education Act.

Implementing subjects: the National Council for Higher Education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education, universities, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2008-2009

3.3.4. Extracurricular (gender) educational programmes will be introduced in elementary and secondary schools.

Implementing subjects: the Education and Teacher Training Agency, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

3.3.5. In financing scientific and research projects and projects in the field of culture, account will be taken of **gender mainstreaming** and balanced funding of projects, in view of their impact on gender equality.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Ministry of Culture
Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

4. Equality in decision-making

Democracy which excludes a large number of citizens from decision-making processes is not genuine democracy. Indicators for measuring progress in the field of political and public decision-making, according to Council of Europe criteria are: 1) the percentage of women and men elected representatives in the Croatian Parliament, county assemblies, town and municipal counties, according to political party; 2) the percentage of women and men elected representatives in the Croatian Parliament compared to the number of candidates according to political party; 3) the percentage of women and men in national delegations to nominated assemblies such as the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and to international organisations and fora; 4) the percentage of women and men in the Government; 5) the number of women and men ministers in the different fields of action; 6) the percentage of the highest ranking women and men civil servants and their distribution in different fields of action; 7) the percentage of women and men judges in the Supreme Court; 8) the percentage of women and men in bodies appointed by the Government; 9) the percentage of women and men in the decision-making bodies of political parties at national level; 10) the percentage of women and men members of employer, labour and professional organisations and the percentage of women and men in their decision-making bodies at national level.

By these criteria, women in Croatia are under-represented in the political, economic and public decision-making processes and what is also visible is the lack of statistical data in these areas. By the year 2010, particularly in view of parliamentary and general local elections to be held, it will be necessary to significantly increase political representation of women at all levels of government.

4.1. Achieve balanced representation of men and women in representative and executive government bodies at all levels

4.1.1. Political institutions and political parties will be informed about the Recommendation Rec (2003) 3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making.

Implementing subject: the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2007

4.1.2. Forums, conferences, campaigns, etc. on political representation of women in the legislative and executive power at national and local level will be regularly held, to raise public awareness of this issue.

Implementing subjects: the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, the Office for Gender Equality, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

4.1.3. Methods for mandatory gender-disaggregated statistical recording of all accepted and valid lists at national, county, town and municipal levels will be prescribed.

Implementing subject: the State Electoral Commission

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

4.1.4. Statistical data on the share of women in the total number of candidates on election lists will be systematically published, by proposers.

Implementing subjects: the State Electoral Commission, electoral commissions of local and regional self-government units, the Central Bureau of Statistics

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

4.1.5. Forms by which candidates accept their candidatures for inclusion in election lists will be brought into line with the Gender Equality Act by introduction of feminine forms of nouns, and the same will be done in forms by which members of electoral commissions accept their duties as members of bodies for conduct of elections for representative bodies at all levels, and in the election legislation.

Implementing subjects: the State Electoral Commission, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2007

4.2. Achieve balanced representation of men and women in appointments to state bodies, bodies of local and territorial (regional) self-government units, other legal persons with public authority and management boards in the public sector at national and local level.

4.2.1. A database of participation of women in decision-making in the political, economic and public life of the country will be established.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

4.2.2. Pursuant to the Gender Equality Act, in appointments to state bodies, bodies of local and territorial (regional) self-government units and other legal persons with public authority account will be taken of even representation of both sexes.

Implementing subjects: state bodies, state administration bodies, legal persons with public authority, local and territorial (regional) self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

4.2.3. Even representation of women and men in managerial positions at universities and higher education institutions will be systematically promoted.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, universities

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

4.2.4. An analysis of the share of women in management boards of state-owned enterprises will be made and submitted to the Office for Gender Equality.

Implementing subjects: the Central State Office for State Property Management, the Croatian Privatisation Fund

Time frame for implementation: 2006/2007

5. Violence against women

The main objective of this programme area is to suppress and eliminate domestic violence by implementing the existing strategies and programmes and propose measures for the elimination of all other forms of violence against women.

5.1. Eliminate all forms of domestic violence and improve the protection of victims of domestic violence

5.1.1. Measures of the National Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence for the period from 2005 to 2007 and the Protocol for Handling Domestic Violence Cases will be implemented and their implementation will be monitored.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, competent state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

5.1.2. The application of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act and the Criminal Code will be regularly monitored, and amendments proposed if necessary.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, competent state administration bodies

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

5.1.3. A new National Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence for the period from 2008 to 2010 will be adopted.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, competent state administration bodies, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2008

5.1.4. Workshops will be held to provide systematic training for judges and municipal public prosecutors who handle domestic violence cases, with a view to improving legal protection and assistance for victims of domestic violence.

Implementing subjects: the Judicial Academy, the Ministry of Justice

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.1.5. A "Campaign on Combating Domestic Violence against Women" will be conducted.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Office for Human Rights, the Office for Gender Equality, the media, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2008

5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against women

5.2.1. The Council of Europe Recommendation (2002) 5 on the protection of women against violence will be implemented.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Office for Human Rights, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

5.2.2. A working group will be established to draw up an analysis and action plan for the suppression of all forms of violence against women, which will also include the collection of statistical data.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, competent state administration bodies, county/local gender equality commissions, the Central Bureau of Statistics, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

5.2.3. An analysis of harmonisation of the existing laws of the Republic of Croatia with basic international regulations on elimination of all forms of violence against women will be made and legislative amendments will be proposed.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration/the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.2.4. A media awareness-raising campaign will be organised for women to encourage them to use legal protection mechanisms in case of violence.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity/the Ministry of Justice, the Office for Gender Equality, competent state administration bodies, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

5.2.5. Financial support will be provided for work of non-governmental organisations active in empowering women to leave prostitution, and for other non-governmental organisations working towards the prevention and suppression of various forms of violence against women.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Human Rights, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.2.6. Corruption of police officers working on investigations/cases involving prostitution will be systematically sanctioned.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.2.7. The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings will be ratified.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Human Rights/the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2006

5.2.8. The implementation of measures of annual Operational Plans for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings will continue.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Human Rights, competent state administration bodies, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2008

5.2.9. Public campaigns will be conducted with the aim of informing the community and raising public awareness of the phenomenon, problems and ways of prevention of trafficking in human beings and prostitution.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Human Rights, the Office for National Minorities, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.2.10. The Republic of Croatia will join the international Network against Harmful Traditions (NAHT) and carry out a survey to define measures for combating harmful traditional practices.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Office for National Minorities, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2008

5.2.11. The Criminal Code will be amended to define more precisely the criminal offence of sexual acts equivalent to rape.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

5.2.12. The Criminal Procedure Act will be amended to provide protection for victims of sexual violence and reduce further trauma to them, and to simplify and dynamise investigative and judicial proceedings, including the improvement of conditions in which judicial proceedings are conducted.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Justice, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2006

5.2.13. Cases involving violence against women will be systematically and analytically monitored and the system for keeping statistical data, data exchange and cooperation between the police, health institutions, courts and the Public Prosecution Service of the Republic of Croatia in cases involving violence against women will be improved.

Implementing subjects: the Public Prosecution Service of the Republic of Croatia, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, courts, health institutions

Time frame for implementation: 2007

5.2.14. A standardised protocol will be adopted on the conduct of medical staff in cases of violence against women, especially sexual violence.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

5.2.15. Counselling will be provided to women victims of violence, including free psychotherapy, with the obligation to protect confidentiality of information about victims of violence.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare/the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.2.16. A Protocol of Conduct in Case of Sexual Violence will be adopted and disseminated to all the relevant institutions, and especially elementary and secondary schools.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

5.2.17. The National Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 22 September, will be regularly observed, as well as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November.

Implementing subjects: the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.3. Develop awareness of all forms of violence against women amongst public workers, law enforcement staff, judges, health and social workers (education)

5.3.1. Further training in all forms of violence against women will be encouraged for teaching and professional staff in elementary and secondary schools, and in colleges.

Implementing subjects: the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Agency for Science and Higher Education at the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the National Council for Higher Education, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, independent experts, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.3.2. Expert seminars will be held on all forms of violence against women in health institutions, courts, centres of social welfare, family centres and police departments.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, independent experts, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

5.3.3. Educational material on all forms of violence against women will be printed and distributed to all competent institutions.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

6. Women and health

When drawing up legislative proposals which can have significant influence on women's health and are related to the realisation of the strategy and plan for the reform of the health care and health insurance systems, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare will take account of special needs of women.

The measures proposed were drawn up using the available data on the situation of health care of women and critical areas, recommendations by competent international bodies, frames of reference of the existing legislative framework in the field of health and recently adopted national programmes in the field of health, statistics, health and safety at work, social welfare, family and actions for young people. In approaching this area account was taken of recommendations ensuing from the European Strategy for the Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (REC 1675(2004)) which defines reproductive health as a state of physical, mental and social well-being and urges members states of the Council of Europe to influence, through their national strategies, a better training in sexual and reproductive health and create conditions for efficient and systematic collection of the relevant data.

6.1. Improve the methodology of work relating to statistical indicators of health status of women

6.1.1. All health indicators, disaggregated by gender, will be systematically collected, monitored, processed and published and mechanisms will be strengthened for the control and systematic reporting to the Croatian Institute of Public Health of data of which there is insufficient knowledge, for example those relating to termination of pregnancy and injuries due to violence against women.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Institute of Health Insurance, the Medical Chamber

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

6.2. Introduce an effective system for the prevention and early detection of malignant tumours (breast, cervix and colon)

6.2.1. Campaigns will be organised to promote healthy lifestyles and give warnings about harmful habits, such as addiction, smoking, alcoholism, by publishing information and educational material, brochures and leaflets on early detection of malignant diseases and by organising their distribution at all levels of health care.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the League against Cancer, the National Commission for Combating HIV/AIDS, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in cooperation with NGOs, county/local gender equality commissions

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

6.2.2. Media programmes will be organised on the occasion of the International Cancer Awareness Week, with special emphasis on raising public awareness of the need for the prevention and early detection of breast cancer.

Implementing subjects: the League against Cancer, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Institute of Public Health, county/local gender equality commissions, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

6.2.3. A screening programme and a register of risk groups in the women's population will be established, and the data obtained will make possible monitoring and regular free checkups.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Institute of Public Health, the League against Cancer, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Time frame for implementation: 2007

6.2.4. The efficiency of the Programme for the Prevention and Early Detection of Malignant Tumours in Women will be monitored.

Implementing subjects: the League against Cancer, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

6.2.5. In primary health care, special teams will be trained and adequately equipped with diagnostic instruments (e.g. mammographs, ultrasound), and equipment will be provided for diagnostic laboratories (e.g. for Pap smear testing and virus genotyping)

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, local and regional self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

6.2.6. A revised publication "Early Detection of Breast Cancer" will be printed and distributed, as part of the National Programme against Breast Cancer.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

6.3. Improve measures for the preservation of reproductive health of women and promote understanding and need for the protection of their reproductive and sexual rights

6.3.1. Conditions in public health institutions will be standardised as regards the application of the Act on Health Measures for the Exercise of the Right to Freely Make Decisions about Having a Baby (*Narodne novine*, no. 18/78), with special emphasis on standardising the quality of service delivery, price and ethical conduct.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Medical Chamber, the Croatian Medical Association

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

6.3.2. A comprehensive programme for humanisation of childbirth will be drawn up, which will include drafting and adopting guidelines for a natural childbirth, promotion of physiological childbirth, and education of women and health workers about patients' rights with a view to ensuring a greater participation of women in making decisions on childbirth.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in cooperation with commissions for the protection of patients' rights, experts and NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

6.3.3. The availability of all means of protection against unwanted pregnancy will be increased, as well as of means for alleviating discomforts associated with menopause, by reducing their price and increasing supply of these products on the market.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Institute of Health Insurance, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Time frame for implementation: 2007

6.4. Reduce the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases

6.4.1. Information will be provided and the level of knowledge and public awareness will be systematically raised of the types of sexually transmitted diseases, and of the need for their prevention and methods of timely and efficient protection (promotional materials, media campaigns, lectures).

Implementing subjects: the National Commission for Combating HIV/AIDS, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

6.4.2. A comprehensive programme for combating sexually transmitted diseases will be drawn up.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in cooperation with NGOs and independent experts

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

6.4.3. In elementary and secondary schools health education contents will be expanded to include topics on sexuality, with emphasis on the protection from sexually transmitted diseases.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of the Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, Info-centres and macro-regional centres for young people, in cooperation with NGOs and experts

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

6.4.4. Conditions will be established for raising the level of protection from sexually transmitted diseases by enabling direct access to counselling services (admission without a referral slip), opening more counselling centres, providing equipment for diagnostic laboratories for sexually transmitted diseases in primary health care, and drawing up a screening plan.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Institute of Public Health, local and regional self-government units, county/local gender equality commissions

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

6.5. Raise the level of protection and preservation of health at work, in particular of mental health of women

6.5.1. Efficiency levels will be raised in the protection and preservation of mental health of women, with special emphasis on drawing up a programme of prevention of disturbances affecting employed women.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Croatian Employers' Association, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, in cooperation with trade unions

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

7. Institutional mechanisms and implementation arrangements

As part of efforts to enhance institutional mechanisms, it is necessary to continue with the work on introducing measures for the strengthening and networking of institutional mechanisms on national and local levels, amongst other things by providing adequate working conditions, staff and financial resources. With a view to further developing the methods of implementation, and in line with the processes for improving gender-aware policies at EU level, support will be provided for carrying out statistical and scientific analyses and research, a scientific and research centre for these issues will be founded and guidelines for the assessment and adoption of gender-sensitive budgets will be elaborated.

7.1. Enhance mechanisms for the implementation of gender equality at national and local level and improve their coordinated action

7.1.1. The Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia will be provided with sufficient staff and financial resources for effective implementation of tasks falling within its competence, as specified by the Gender Equality Act.

Implementing subjects: the Government of the Republic of Croatia

Time frame for implementation: 2007

7.1.2. The Office for Gender Equality and the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament will jointly consider difficulties in implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality on a regular basis, and the Committee will convene regular thematic sessions aimed at finding the best solutions.

Implementing subjects: the Committee for Gender Equality/the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.1.3. The Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Parliament will be brought in line with the Gender Equality Act.

Implementing subjects: the Committee for the Constitution, Rules of Procedure and Political System and the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament

Time frame for implementation: 2007

7.1.4. Coordination will be improved among various mechanisms for gender equality at national and local level, as well as their cooperation with non-governmental organisations and the civil society.

Implementing subjects: the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, the Office for Gender Equality, coordinators in state administration bodies, county/local gender equality commissions in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.1.5. Training seminars will be held once a year for coordinators in state administration bodies and offices of state administration in counties with the aim of achieving more efficient application of regulations and performance of tasks in the implementation of the gender equality policy.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.1.6. State administration bodies will provide the Office for Gender Equality and the Ombudswoman for Gender Equality with information about procedures for drawing up and proposing laws, regulations and other acts, which directly or indirectly relate to gender equality, for the purposes of their alignment with the Gender Equality Act.

Implementing subjects: state administration bodies

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.1.7. Joint activities will be carried out with a view to promoting the measures of the National Policy for Gender Equality, including the organisation of forums, campaigns, round tables, etc.

Implementing subjects: the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, the Office for Gender Equality, state administration bodies in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.2. Promote equality of women and men in municipalities, towns and counties, by introducing the principle of gender equality on local level, and establish and empower local gender equality commissions

7.2.1. County gender equality commissions will operate in all counties, as working and advisory bodies of county assemblies for the implementation of the Gender Equality Act and the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality on local level.

Implementing subjects: regional self-government units/counties

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.2.2. The composition of these commissions will include members of county assemblies, coordinators from state administration offices, representatives of non-governmental organisations and independent experts in issues from the scope of work of the commissions.

Implementing subjects: county assemblies

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2007

7.2.3. The composition of gender equality commissions will be analysed and regularly monitored in terms of age, expertise, knowledge of human rights of women and published on internet pages of the Office for Gender Equality.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2007

7.2.4. County commissions for gender equality at representative bodies will promote the establishment of town/municipal commissions for gender equality in their counties, keep records, cooperate with them and regularly inform the Office for Gender Equality about this.

Implementing subjects: county gender equality commissions

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.2.5. Once a year the Coordinating Body of County Commissions will hold a meeting to improve and coordinate their work and exchange information and examples of good practice in the implementation of the gender equality policy at local level.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, county gender equality commissions

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.3. Introduce gender-sensitive policy in the media

7.3.1. The public will be informed about the obligations to introduce gender-sensitive policies in all areas of social life in the Republic of Croatia, in line with the national legislation and EU standards.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Radio and Television/the Council of the HRT, the media, the Office for Gender Equality, the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.3.2. Funds will be allocated for the production and/or co-production of gender-sensitive media contents and media space will be provided for broadcasting gender-sensitive programmes produced by independent production companies.

Implementing subjects: the Croatian Radio and Television, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament, the media, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.3.3. An independent body will be established which will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the gender equality policy in the media, in accordance with the Gender Equality Act.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with the Croatian Journalists' Association, independent experts and NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2006

7.3.4. The efficiency of the protection from gender discrimination and violations of the right to privacy in the media legislation will be improved by amendments to the existing laws.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Culture, the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

7.3.5. A programme of support for victims of gender discrimination in the media and advertising will be drawn up on the basis of the UN protection mechanisms, the mechanisms of the European Social Charter and the International Labour Organisation.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality in cooperation with trade unions and NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007

7.3.6. Provision will be made for keeping statistical data on the number of women working in particular media and types of their jobs, and in keeping court statistics access will be provided to data on the number, types and outcomes of court proceedings instituted on grounds of gender discrimination in the media.

Implementing subjects: the Central Bureau of Statistics, courts, the Ministry of Justice, the Office for Gender Equality

Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010

7.4. Introduce gender-differentiated management of budgetary resources and develop a methodology for collecting statistical data, and undertake appropriate gender research

7.4.1. Financial resources will be provided from the State Budget to support targeted scientific research in the field of gender equality.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality, state administration bodies

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

7.4.2. A department/centre will be established at the Institute for Social Research to carry out analyses and research for the Government of the Republic of Croatia, state administration bodies, and for cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Government of the Republic of Croatia

Time frame for implementation: 2008-2009

7.4.3. A methodology manual on gender-differentiated management of budgetary resources will be developed and distributed, for the purposes of reviewing public budgets in view of their impact on the implementation of the gender equality policy.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality/the Ministry of Finance, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2008

7.4.4. Training in gender-sensitive management of budgetary resources will be organised for county and local gender equality commissions.

Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Finance/the Office for Gender Equality, in cooperation with NGOs

Time frame for implementation: 2008

7.4.5. A working group will be established to monitor gender-sensitive statistics and develop indicators for monitoring the implementation of the National Policy for Gender Equality.

Implementing subjects: the Office for Gender Equality and the Central Bureau of Statistics

Time frame for implementation: 2007

7.4.6. Funding will be provided for the implementation of measures from the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality from the State Budget and from budgets of local and territorial (regional) self-government units, and all bodies entrusted with the implementation of these measures are obliged to include them in their annual plans and provide necessary financial resources every year.

Implementing subjects: state bodies, state administration bodies, local and territorial (regional) self-government units

Time frame for implementation: 2007-2010

VI. FINAL PROVISIONS

1. The Office for Gender Equality shall monitor the implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality and shall inform the Government of the Republic of Croatia about its implementation every two years.

2. After adopting the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the Office for Gender Equality shall publish it on its internet pages, and shall print and distribute it to the implementing subjects within three months.

3. The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality shall be published in *Narodne novine*.

Classification number: 004-01/06-01/12

Zagreb, 13 October 2006

THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT
The President of the Croatian Parliament
Vladimir Šeks, m.p.