

LUXEMBOURG

GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG

MINISTRY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

**Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the
Outcome of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly (2000)**

**REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GRAND DUCHY
OF LUXEMBOURG**

April 2004

PART I Overview of Achievements and Challenges in Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Following the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Interministerial Committee on Gender Equality prepared an action plan for implementing the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action. Known as the “Action Plan 2000”, it was adopted by the government in March 1997 and established the framework for initiatives and measures taken by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women.

In follow-up to the recommendations from the 23rd special session of the General Assembly (Beijing + 5), the government prepared a strategic framework and a national action plan, adopted on 29 June 2001, for implementing the gender equality policy during the period 2001/2005. This new commitment complemented the 2000 action plan and the Interministerial Committee was given responsibility for monitoring its implementation and proposing concrete steps to that end.

The priority themes are: combating poverty and social exclusion; education and training; health; violence; conflict situations; economic life; decision-making; mechanisms for the advancement of women; the exercise of fundamental rights; and the media. The second part of this report provides details relating to these priority themes.

The government has also taken the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as its guide for transposing measures to promote gender equality. The Committee's conclusions are now reflected in legislation: the domestic violence law, the law for implementing the national plan of action for employment (introducing affirmative action in the private sector and requiring that collective bargaining arrangements include an equality plan); introduction of parental leave; a bill concerning the patronymic name; a bill amending article 11 of the Constitution to recognize equality between men and women.

This report highlights actions under two of the priority themes based on the Beijing Programme of Action: education and violence

First example of good practice: the pilot project for “Sharing Equality” (“*Partageons l'égalité - Gleichheit delen - Gleichheit Teilen*”). The Ministry for the Advancement of Women launched this project in 1996 within the framework of the Fourth European Community Programme of Action on Equality of Opportunity for Men and Women in order to enhance equality of opportunity between girls and boys of preschool education age and to promote equality of opportunity for women and men in the workplace. It introduced the “gender pedagogy” approach, which recognizes the differences in socialization between women and men and offers boys and girls prospects for individual development beyond traditional roles, with a view to implementing a non-discriminatory education and training system. Gender training for instructors and teachers is designed to make them aware of the stereotypes that they themselves may have adopted and unconsciously conveyed over the years, and to strengthen introspection about the teaching methods applied.

In 2003, a draft education bill was prepared, setting out guidelines for schooling. This bill includes the gender equality dimension and gives the schools the mission of “promoting the

equality of women and men in society, ensuring equal rights and opportunities between girls and boys at school, and portraying other people in a manner free of all discrimination. Schooling is coeducational”. With this bill, the concept of gender pedagogy will be mainstreamed throughout the education system (preschool, primary and secondary).

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, as the coordinating body, has been working with the National Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the communes, labour unions and an NGO working on women's issues. These partners have served as multipliers for a series of collective and individual initiatives for awareness, information and training targeted at a very broad audience in the education and employment worlds. The project is being conducted under the responsibility of the national mechanism for the promotion of gender equality, which has incorporated the results from all its projects.

CHALLENGE: The “Sharing Equality” project was designed to change the behaviour of boys and girls and of all those responsible for their education and training. It has remained at the pilot project stage: now that the contents and methods of gender pedagogy have been developed, it remains to implement them throughout the school system and in the training of teaching and educational personnel. A study launched in 2002 by the University of Luxembourg on gender impact in personal and vocational development of teaching staff and training personnel will provide further information on the way teachers and special-education instructors perceive their roles and will help to mainstream the gender aspect in the training curricula for such personnel.

Second example of good practice : The Law of 8 September 2003 on domestic violence authorizes expulsion of a violent partner as a way of achieving three objectives:

1. Prompt intervention to prevent acts of domestic violence in acute situations.
2. Offender accountability, with a view to long-term prevention.
3. Social awareness of the seriousness and the specific nature of domestic violence.

Since expulsion alone is not enough to achieve these results, the law takes a comprehensive approach consisting of five essential elements that are intimately linked: aggravating circumstances, expulsion of the offender by the police, special referral procedures, strengthening the role of victims' rights associations, and the collection of statistics. In addition, the law revokes article 413 of the criminal code, which absolves a spouse from responsibility for murder or beating of the other spouse and his or her accomplice when they are caught in the act of adultery.

Although it came into effect only recently, this law has already had a noticeable impact. According to information to date, 64 men have been expelled from the family home. This figure does not take account of police interventions that did not result in removal, nor does it take into account removal warrants that were rejected by the prosecutor's office.

An assistance service for victims of domestic violence (SAV) has been established to initiate contact with victims, provide them appropriate support, and inform them of their right to lay charges and to demand other protective measures.

Finally, an anonymous telephone counselling service for men seeking to break the vicious cycle of violence has been in place since 1 December 2003, operated by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, as part of a project by the European Society Counselling Violence Perpetrators Therapy (EUGET, www.euget.org) under the European DAPHNE programme. The availability of counselling for violent offenders is helping to break the spiral of violence and prevent the transmission of violent behaviour from one generation to the next.

It is essential to provide sensitization and training for people involved in law enforcement, the police, the magistrates, physicians and social workers. There is also a need for investments to prevent violence, starting with early childhood.

The law owes its existence in large part to the efforts of NGOs active in combating violence against women. It was they that informed and sensitized members of Parliament and the government about the Austrian model, contained in a law of December 1996, for having the police expel perpetrators of domestic violence. In addition, the Law of 8 September 2003 establishes a legal framework for cooperation between the authorities and victim assistance services, which by law have an important role in counselling victims in case of expulsion.

CHALLENGE: this law is intended to prevent domestic violence, and its enforcement is expected to bring about a fundamental change in the social mentality. Yet the media have failed to take much interest in this problem. Whenever a victim dies from domestic violence, the media speak of “a tragic family incident”. Generating awareness among the media and the general public about the specific form of violence remains a challenge.

In terms of results from legislation and policies:

The advancement of women has been made an explicit goal of development cooperation by a 1996 law governing Luxembourg's development cooperation.

There has been significant progress in providing social protection for elderly women.

- The Law of 6 April 1999 made several amendments to the general pension insurance system, with the effect of allowing women to constitute their own pension rights. For example, the law recognizes retroactive supplements for raising children, it introduces optional and retroactive pension insurance, and it allows part-time workers to carry over pensionable working time of less than 64 hours a month, which previously did not generate pension rights, something that was a disadvantage for the women primarily concerned by this measure.
- The Law of 28 July 2000 on the coordination of legal pension systems extended the provisions of the Law of 6 April 1999 on optional insurance, retroactive purchase, and return of contributions. With that amendment, a woman now has the option of purchasing insurance, even retroactively, if she has abandoned or reduced her working activity for family reasons.

- The Law of 28 June 2002 adapting the general and special pension systems and creating a child-rearing allowance, while amending the guaranteed minimum income law, changed provisions for the “baby years”, by extending the three-year reference period to cover child-rearing time, and it introduced payment of a child-rearing allowance, under certain conditions, for parents who have devoted their time exclusively to child rearing.

In the area of labour legislation:

- The Law of 7 July 1998 calls for appointment of an “equality delegate” in private-sector enterprises responsible for ensuring equality of wage treatment between women and men, and the fair application of legal provisions in this regard.
- The Law of 12 February 1999 on implementation of the national plan of action for employment introduces specific measures to promote women's employment and to help them reconcile family and working life. This law also introduces parental leave for six months, during which the worker, either father or mother, who looks after the child receives a parental leave allowance. The law also recognizes leave for family reasons at the rate of two days per child per year, which employees may take in case of illness or accident involving a child under 15 years of age. During this leaves, the beneficiary is entitled to an allowance paid entirely by the government.
- This law was strengthened by the Law of 19 December 2003 which, as a derogation from the law on equal treatment of men and women, allows job offers and published employment announcements to give preference to workers of the under-represented sex.
- Employment enabling activities, under the Law of 29 April 1999 creating a guaranteed minimum income, are designed to help people escape poverty by joining the workforce. Dispensation is granted to a person responsible for raising a child when serious considerations relating to the child's welfare prevent participation in those activities.
- The Law of 26 May 2000 on protection against sexual harassment in the workplace defines sexual harassment and protects both the victim and any witnesses, who are defended against reprisals. Any action, such as dismissal, taken against a victim for opposing sexual harassment is null and void. In order to protect workers more effectively against the risk of sexual harassment, the employer is made responsible for introducing a working environment free of sexual harassment, by taking preventive measures and ensuring that all sexual harassment of which he is aware ceases, whether this involves behaviour of an employee, a customer or a supplier. If the employer fails to take action notwithstanding this legal obligation, the victim may ask the president of the labour tribunal to order the employer to put an end to sexual harassment. The victim may quit without notice, and is entitled to damages and interest from the employer whose failure to take action has caused that move.
- The Law of 28 June 2001 on the burden of proof in cases of sexual discrimination introduces the sharing of that burden in cases of direct or indirect discrimination, which is expressly defined in that Law.

- With respect to the protection of maternity for working women, the Law of 1 August 2001 reinforces the protection contained in previous legislation for workers who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breast-feeding, with respect to distinguishing agents, processes and hazardous working conditions.
- The civil service statute was amended by a Law of 19 May 2003 to allow part-time work and to simplify the conditions and procedures for leave without pay and for part-time leave. This law introduces the position of delegate for gender equality in all government departments.
- The Law of 15 May 2003 approved the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 6 October 1999.

Partnerships have been established with nongovernmental organizations promoting women's interests and gender equality, and business and labour groups have stepped up their efforts to promote equality between women and men.

CHALLENGES

The gender wage gap, the reluctance of men to take parental leave, the under-representation of women in political and economic decision-making, the unequal division of private and public tasks, and domestic violence have all been the subject of information, awareness and training campaigns, and of in-depth studies to determine the causes of persistent gender inequality.

Further action is still needed in these fields in order to reduce disparities between women and men.

PART II Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified by the 23rd special session of the General Assembly: policies, legislative reforms, programmes and projects, and lessons learned

1. Poverty and social exclusion

Data collected during preparation of the national action plan against social exclusion contributed to a thorough overhaul of the guaranteed minimum income legislation (RMG) of 26 July 1989 that offers every citizen a decent standard of living by guaranteeing a minimum income.

The gender distribution of beneficiaries under the RMG has shown the following evolution: whereas in 1986, 63% of RMG beneficiaries were women and only 37% were men, the ratio in 2002 was more balanced: 57% women and 43% men. On the other hand, 12.78% of single-parent families receive the RMG, and 95.8% of these are headed by women.

This law establishes a legal framework for combating social exclusion by offering an adequate income to persons in need, and providing occupational and social support for persons who face great obstacles to entering the labour market for the first time.

Activities under that Law serve the objective of helping beneficiaries to escape from poverty by joining the workforce. The Law of 29 April 1999 amending the 1989 law allowed dispensation from participating in these activities for a person who is raising a child only when serious considerations relating to the child's welfare prevent participation in those activities.

The latest report of the Chamber of Deputies, dated 3 March 2004, finds a change in the participation rate in labour market entry programmes. In December 2002, the percentage of non-exempt women was 15.77 (14.36 in 1995), and for men it was 22.93 (28.3 in 1995).

A detailed analysis of the available data on dispensations for the years 1995 to 2003 shows the following trends:

- The percentage of women exempt for childcare reasons (F3 curve) has declined since 1999 from 11.2 to 6.4.
- While the number of non-exempt beneficiaries has declined since 1999, that decline is much less significant for women (F2 curve) than for men (M2).
- A comparison of the percentages for the two sexes among the non-exempt beneficiaries shows a convergence since 2000 (F1 and M1).
- The participation of non-exempt women in labour market entry programmes shows a net advance for women and a convergence of percentages for the two sexes since 2001.

[Insert graph page 14]

With respect to beneficiaries who have rejoined the labour market, a retrospective analysis of the reasons for the expiry of subsidized entry programmes¹, covering the period from 1995 to 2003, shows that the percentage of women, while rising, is still below that for men.

Number of programme beneficiaries successfully entering the labour force:

[Insert table and graph page 15]

YEAR	F	M	TOTAL	%F
.....				

Because old-age pension rights accrue only on the basis of compulsory insurance periods (exercise of an occupation or equivalent period), any person who has not accumulated such compulsory insurance periods has no entitlement to disability or old-age protection. Given the low rate of female employment in Luxembourg, the lack of individual entitlements is felt most strongly in the old-age pension system, and the people most concerned are elderly women who have staid at home to raise their children and perform household tasks. These women receive a survivor's pension when they are widowed, as a result of the transfer of pension rights. But in case of divorce they are dependent on alimony from their former spouse, or on the guaranteed minimum income. The government has established a working group consisting of the ministries involved, business and labour organizations and a representative NGO to draw up proposals for personalizing rights relating to social security and taxation. Amending the social security system is complicated by the fact that the female employment rate remains low and because many women are still dependent on entitlement transfers.

When it comes to cooperation policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been attempting since 1995 to improve the situation of women in the world by financing projects to support them in different situations or phases of their lives, while taking their environment constantly into account. Many projects have thus focused on women's needs in education, health, security, their place in society, and the defence of their rights.

In 1998, the Development Cooperation Division published for the first time an information brochure on gender equality policy in development cooperation, and since then it has sought to integrate this dimension into its development cooperation policy.

The government programme of 12 August 1999 declares that “Luxembourg's development policy effort will remain high and will reach 1% of gross national product. In geographic terms it will be focused on a number of target countries, and in terms of contents, on social, education and health facilities and on promoting equal opportunity for men and women”.

In 2002, Luxembourg opened negotiations with these target countries on Indicative Cooperation Programmes establishing a strategic framework for development collaboration between the two countries. Each of these programmes deals with the question of gender equality as a crosscutting

¹ These figures differ from those published in the annual reports, because the former, unsubsidized labour market entry activities, which ceased to exist in 1999, are not counted.

issue that must be addressed in all projects. This also allows Luxembourg to draw the matter to the attention of the authorities of target countries.

In 2003, the government negotiated a new framework agreement with its implementation agency, Lux Development. The new policy formulation and implementation mandates that the government has given to Lux Development all contain references to gender equality and the need to reflect this concern across all projects. Training will be provided to this end.

Between 1998 and 2002, the percentage of development cooperation projects supported by Luxembourg (as a proportion of total annual ODA) for the benefit of girls and women, or promoting equal opportunity, evolved as follows:

[Insert graph, page 17: **Proportion of projects targeted primarily at women as a percentage of total ODA**]

2. Education and training

In Luxembourg, girls have equal access with boys to the different levels of education. National education statistics broken down by sex show that girls are over-represented in secondary education, especially in the humanities stream of general secondary school, and in the services-oriented subjects at the upper (level 3) cycle of technical secondary school. Those statistics also show that, overall, girls do better at school than boys.

In the specialization cycle of the higher division (classes 2 and 1) of general secondary education, students opt for the following subjects:

a) Humanities stream

A1 modern languages

A2 social sciences

E art

F music

b) Sciences stream

B mathematics – physical sciences

C mathematics – natural sciences

D mathematics – economics

Class 2, 1995-1996: Enrolment in subject areas, by sex

Subject	A1	%	A2	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%	F	%
Boys	29	22	102	43	101	76	122	49	112	49	18	24	9	64
Girls	102	78	137	67	32	24	126	51	118	51	56	76	5	36

Class 2, 2001/2002: Enrolment in subject areas, by sex

Subject	A1	%	A2	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%	F	%
Boys	33	22	103	45	87	70	137	48	129	51	28	24	9	33
Girls	118	78	123	55	37	30	149	52	122	49	89	76	18	67

Distribution by sex amongst the various divisions of the middle cycle of the technical stream in technical secondary education:

1995/1996 Class 10

Division	% girls	% boys	Total students
Administrative and commercial	61.8	38.2	393
General technical	29.6	70.4	228
Paramedical and social	85.9	14.1	341

2001/2002 Class10

Division	% girls	% boys	Total students
Administrative and commercial	55.8	44.2	500
General technical	31.9	68.1	317
Paramedical and social	82.1	17.9	307

To promote gender equality in education and training, the ministry has put particular stress on awareness campaigns for teaching staff and on promoting a differentiated approach to teaching. As part of the ongoing training for teaching staff, optional courses in gender pedagogy has been organized, but their intended beneficiaries have not shown the degree of interest that was originally expected. It has now been decided that all continuous training must include gender mainstreaming. This principle will be evaluated at the beginning of the 2004/2005 school year as equality criterion.

The ministry has also prepared and distributed two practical guides dealing with respect for equality and diversity in the selection and preparation of teaching materials, to promote mainstreaming of the gender perspective in national and European projects, respectively.

Women's participation in continuing education and training programmes is closely related to female employment. As the female employment rate has risen, the proportion of women enrolled in continuing education and training activities has increased.

The horizontal segregation evident in the training and employment options of women finds its reflection in their choices for continuing education and training. This poses the continuing challenge of making greater efforts to steer women's interest towards the information and communication technologies, in order to combat the gender digital divide.

The government is paying particular attention to training for women looking for a job and for those seeking to re-enter the labour market. Training for job seekers provided by the National Education Ministry through the National Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (CNFPC)

has shown a steady increase in female enrolment rates. In addition to the services offered by the CNFPC, ministries responsible for training and employment have established cooperation agreements with agencies that provide training exclusively for women. These agreements call for the ministry to approve training programmes and to certify trainees.

The ministries and departments responsible for employment and training have adopted a common information strategy that includes publications listing counselling and advisory services for women, to ensure that women are well informed about training reserved for them and about all the employment and adult training facilities available.

In terms of legislation, the principle of equality between men and women has been built into education objectives in the basic schools bill (cf. Part I).

Diversifying occupational choices remains a challenge, both for girls and for boys. The National Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports has included this theme in the continuous training provided for school guidance counsellors. A practical guide on this subject, for students and parents, is now being prepared. The NGO “*CID-femmes*”, in cooperation with the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training and Sports, the high schools and school guidance services, the vocational guidance service, business and labour organizations, sponsored “Girls’ Day” in Luxembourg in 2001, in an effort to promote diversity of educational and occupational choices for girls, to interest girls in technical training and in scientific studies, in the technical trades, and in the new information and communication technologies.

The quality and conditions of employment offered to young women will in the future be a determining factor in the growth of female employment and in eliminating the wage gap between men and women.

For the national Education Ministry, this means three priorities:

- Information and awareness campaigns targeted at girls and young women to encourage them to put their basic education performance (where they have better success rates and higher qualification levels than boys) to their advantage in the labour market and to pursue training that will lead to jobs and careers where they are under-represented.
- Expanding the number of girls and women enrolled in technical and scientific courses.
- Working with the family policy authorities to expand the child supervision services available outside school hours so that parents can pursue their vocational career.

3. Health

Recent years have seen a number of efforts to examine the health status of women more specifically. Health promotion and prevention programmes have been developed, as well as programmes for the early detection of disease.

A gender-specific study on mortality has been conducted. Over the last 20 years, the general mortality rate and the premature mortality rate have declined by around 33% for men, and by 41% for women.

Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death, accounting for 40% of total mortality (44% among women, 35% among men). In second place are deaths from tumours, which are responsible for nearly 26% of total mortality (24% among women, 28% among men).

The most frequent cancers among women are those of the breast, the large intestine, the lungs, and the genitals.

Over the space of 20 years mortality from external causes has declined by around 35%, but this is still one of the highest rates in the European Union. For women, it declined from 50/100,000 at the beginning of the 1980s to 30/100,000 by 2000. From 1968 to 1997, the portion of the mortality rate due to traffic accidents among children and youth aged one to 24 years declined by 34%: 37% for boys, and 18% for girls.

The incidence of cancer has risen since 1980 by around 40% for men and 55% for women. This is due in large part to the aging of the population, but also to the fact that a growing number of cancers are detected early, with the resulting favourable prognosis.

In terms of female cancers, there has been a considerable decline since 1980 in mortality from cancers of the cervix, large intestine, and breast. But at the same time there has been a sharp rise in the rate of lung cancer mortality, which rose from 12.6/100,000 in 1980-1984 to 20.6/100,000 in 1995-1999.

Nearly 50% of new invasive cancer cases of the breast occur among women between the ages of 50 and 69 years. A comparison of the incidence of breast cancer in Luxembourg for the years 1985-89 and 1995-99 shows that it was stable for women between the ages of 40 and 44, but that it rose by 30% for women aged 45 to 49. Public health policy now urges screening for women under 50 years, and in particular those between 45 and 49 years who present increased risk. With respect to breast cancer, a national programme for systematic early detection using mammography was launched in 1992, and appears to be having success in terms of better detection. It is targeted at women between the ages of 50 and 69 years.

Since 1999, the participation rate has remained stable. The percentage of women who have undergone a mammography exam has not yet reached the 70% level stipulated in the European Guidelines: it was only 51% in 2002.

The mammogram programme is evaluated in accordance with the recommendations of the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance and Mammography Screening.

Activities

- Regular awareness campaigns are conducted in cooperation with NGOs.
- A web site, www.mammographie.lu, has been established to inform and sensitize the general public and health professionals.

- A new agreement between the Ministry of Health and the Health Medical Association, on a permanent programme for early detection of breast cancer through mammograms, was published in November 2003.
- Several epidemiological evaluation studies have been conducted and published.

An evaluation of our health education and promotion programmes suggests that, in general, women are now more aware of the role of good nutrition in preventing disease. They are also readier to participate in early detection and prevention initiatives, and they often serve as multipliers and motivators in their own family and social circle. On the other hand, they are less likely to take part in physical activities and sports in order to stay in good health. When it comes to sexual and reproductive health, a law was adopted on 1 August 2001 governing measures to promote improved safety and health for workers who are pregnant, have recently given birth, or are breast-feeding.

Many efforts have been made to promote maternal breast-feeding. Distribution, prescription and administration of the drug Mifegyne for medical abortion was authorized on 17 January 2001. A medical centre specialized in assisted procreation has been established at the Hospital Centre of Luxembourg. With a view to providing better care and medical and psychosocial monitoring for socially and economically disadvantaged pregnant women and their babies, a number of projects have been initiated by the professions and by medical and social institutions. The administration of epidural anaesthesia during childbirth was introduced by grand ducal regulation of 17 March 2003.

Sexual education is no longer regarded as the sole responsibility of specialized professionals. A multidisciplinary and intersectoral approach has been adopted, and many efforts have been made to integrate sex education for young people in various areas of life and learning (schools, communes, medical and social services, youth organizations etc.). A study of youth health in Luxembourg, which involved a survey of 28% of teenagers between 13 and 19 years, has produced data on sexual life, contraception habits, and sexual violence. The study methodology used the WHO “Health Behaviour in School-aged Children” survey protocol. Among young people who have a sexual partner (44.4% of the total), the great majority (more than 90%) feel that they can talk about any matter with their partner, take common decisions, and share responsibility. 74.1% of young people with partners have already had sexual intercourse. 79.9% of girls say they always use a means of contraception, while only 64.2% of boys make this claim. Sex education remains a challenge primarily for young people with little schooling.

The data on sexual violence are disturbing: 23.3% of girls and 15.4% of boys say that they have been kissed, touched or fondled without their consent.

4. Violence (cf. Part I)

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women has stepped up its campaign to combat violence against women and their children. In the context of the law on domestic violence, a message dealing with the expulsion of a violent domestic partner was broadcast by radio. In addition, conferences on trafficking in women and on the law on domestic violence have been organized.

The accent of the 2003 campaign was on training, information and awareness. This has included practical training for members of the national police directorate and the prosecutor's office, training for officers of the National Police Academy on domestic violence, and training in the systematic detection of female victims of spousal violence and on the enforcement of the law of 8 September 2003 on domestic violence has been provided for Red Cross social workers, in cooperation with women's shelters. And awareness campaign was conducted using advertising spots on TV and in all the country's cinemas, carrying the message "No more compromise: stop violence against women and girls!"

As part of its efforts to combat human trafficking, the Government of Luxembourg will no longer issue permits for people from countries not members of the European Union seeking to come to Luxembourg to work as "cabaret artists" or in similar activities, as of 1 May 2004.

Under the "school health initiative" based on principles of the Ottawa Charter of the WHO, the National Education Department has since 1995 been organizing outreach, counselling, training and documentation activities in different areas of health promotion (in particular the prevention of substance abuse, violence and AIDS, and the development of psychosocial skills). As part of the international WHO study on Health Behaviour in School-aged Children, the National Education Department produced and published in 2002 an initial study on youth welfare in Luxembourg. The results of that study, and particularly those relating to gender differences, have been taken into account for planning future actions under the healthy schools initiative. An important tool for preventing violence is the "peer mediation" system that was introduced in the schools in 2000. The gender perspective is being integrated into this project by training young mediators of both sexes and by ensuring equal representation of the sexes in all activities. A fact sheet and checklist for project monitors is now being tested. The documents (reports and announcements) published use a written and visual language that respects the two genders.

5. Conflict situations

The Political Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is investing in projects to support women in conflict or post-conflict situations, to help them defend their right to equality and to play a greater role in society. These projects address two aspects of conflict situations: promoting the role of women in conflict prevention and in education for peace, to help prevent conflicts from arising, and supporting women in post-conflict situations.

With due regard to local circumstances, the projects are intended first to support women and to recognize their central role in creating momentum for conflict prevention (for example the project on "peace and security" financed by UNIFEM and "*Femmes Africa Solidarité*", an NGO that promotes women's human rights networks). Education and awareness are prerequisites, but there is also a need to strengthen women's overall place in society (by promoting literacy, economic and political participation, healthcare etc.), so that they can play an active role in conflict prevention. Women are not regarded as merely helpless victims who need assistance: they are also recognized as helping to promote peace and to rebuild societies traumatized by conflict. In post-conflict situations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs finances projects that take account of women's specific needs and that seek to promote their role in rebuilding a society where reconciliation and equality will prevail (for example the project to support the women's

ministry in Afghanistan through the UNDP, the project to provide shelter for female victims of violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or the project on women's participation in politics for the OSCE Centre in Tashkent).

6. Economic life (Cf. 2) education and training (training and information for women seeking jobs)

The government and the communes have made considerable efforts in recent years to provide more childcare services and to offer child supervision facilities outside school hours to help parents pursue their professional careers while reconciling working and family life.

The number of communes offering childcare services rose by 32% between 2000 and the end of 2003. The government supports the communes in offering daycare services, and covers 50% of the net cost.

In 1998, early childhood education, starting at age three, was introduced in Luxembourg. It is now an integral part of the preschool education system. There is educational continuity between the early childhood and preschool classes (children between four and six years), but early childhood education remains optional. For the school year 2002/2003, 55.8% of eligible children benefited from the service.

The law on implementing the national action plan for employment establishes the legal basis for the Ministry for the Advancement of Women to support private-sector businesses in taking specific measures to promote gender equality. These measures, known as “affirmative action”, relate to recruitment, the organization of work, training, and the reconciliation of family and working life. They make it possible to monitor women's advancement within companies and to compare results between companies. The methodology that the Ministry uses consists in analyzing the situation of women and men within a company, using a standard questionnaire; preparing an action plan, with implementation, follow-up and evaluation; preparing tools such as equality plans, value charters, anti-harassment pacts, and the creation of discussion networks on good practices.

In follow-up to the Action Plan on “Equal pay, a challenge for democratic and economic development”, subsidized by the European Commission, the Ministry for the Advancement of Women has organized training seminars, at the request of business and labour organizations and in cooperation with the Union of Luxembourg Enterprises, dealing with the evaluation and classification of job functions, and targeted at representatives of businesses and unions.

Measures to help with the reconciliation of family and working life have been introduced in the public service statute by legislation dated 19 May 2003:

1. Part-time work, amounting to 25%, 50% or 75% of a full workday, when this is consistent with the needs of the office.
2. On a transitional basis, rehiring of public servants who left the government prior to 1 January 1984 to raise their children.

3. The certification of conditions and procedures for leave without pay and for part-time leave.

This law also introduces the “equality delegate” position in government departments.

The Employment Administration has, at its own initiative, been organizing information workshops for women seeking to join or rejoin the workforce, and it has also been working with women's NGOs to provide vocational re-entry courses for women, offering vocational guidance and instruction in information and communication technologies. Increasing numbers of women are participating in these courses.

OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES

The female employment rate in Luxembourg, at 51.9%, is still one of the lowest in Europe, and wage inequality is persistent despite legislation that requires employers to grant equal pay to men and women for the same work or work of equal value. This means that the quality and conditions of employment for young women will in future be determining factors in raising the employment rate and eliminating the gender wage gap. Girls and young women will also have to be encouraged through information and awareness campaigns to take advantage of their educational achievements when looking for a job, and to seek training in jobs or careers where they are still underrepresented, such as in technical and scientific fields. We must move beyond the stereotypes with which society treats women in general, and particularly those persistent stereotypes that influence young women's schooling and occupational choices. But we must also take concrete measures for older women (55 to 64 years) seeking to re-enter the labour force, recognizing that the overall employment rate for women in this age bracket is only 20%.

7. Decision-making

Women have taken a growing interest in participating actively in political life at the local level over the last 10 years. The number of women who stood for the 1999 communal elections was 24.6%, compared to 18.1% in 1993.

Along with the increase in the percentage of women candidates, the proportion of women elected to local office has risen from 10% to 15%.

Among the country's 118 communes, 12 are headed by a woman mayor. The number of women in positions of leadership such as municipal councillor or mayor has risen steadily.

In the wake of the initiative to promote a policy of equal opportunity for women and men at the municipal level, led by the National Council of Women of Luxembourg with the support of the Union of Cities and Communes of Luxembourg, under the sponsorship of the Minister for the Advancement of Women, the Minister of Labour and Employment and the Minister of the Interior, 59% of communes have now created equal opportunity commissions. These are advisory commissions of the municipal council, established on the basis of the municipalities law. 34.75% of communes have appointed an “equality delegate”.

Although the 1999 coalition agreement provided that the government would not introduce mandatory gender quotas, several political parties have either introduced a quota requiring that at least one third of the membership of their decision-making bodies and their candidate lists for elections must be women, or have adopted a policy to promote women without establishing formal quotas. For the legislative and European elections in June 2004, the percentage of female candidates was 33.41%.

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women and the Chambers of Commerce and Trades conducted a survey in 2001 and drew up a balance sheet on women in decision-making positions in Luxembourg businesses. It showed that, in comparison with their overall employment numbers, and in comparison with their proportion among employees of the firm, women are underrepresented at this level, including boards of directors, management, and decision-making positions in general, as well as in staff representation bodies or “delegations”. In small firms with fewer than 15 employees, they represent on average 40% of total staff but only 31% of decision-makers, while in firms with more than 15 employees, where they represent 33% of staff, they hold only 27% of decision-making positions. The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, under its programme for affirmative action in the private sector, has provided funding to several firms to promote women to positions of decision making. In cooperation with the Union of Luxembourg Enterprises, a sensitization forum was also held for female entrepreneurs.

8. Promotion mechanisms

The law of 7 July 1998 calls for appointment of an equality delegate in private-sector enterprises, to be responsible for ensuring equality of wage treatment between women and men, and the fair application of legal provisions in this regard.

The law of 19 May 2003, amending the law of 60 April 1979, the civil service statute, introduced the obligation of appointing a gender equality delegate in each ministerial department and in each state administration. These delegates, who must take special training to prepare them for their tasks, are expected to make proposals and submit complaints on any issue dealing with gender equality as it relates to access to employment, training, professional development, pay and working conditions.

9. Exercise of fundamental rights

Luxembourg has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which came into force for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on 1 October 2003. Since that date, women have the right to bring complaints against the State, through the CEDAW Committee, for violating the rights enshrined in the Luxembourg Convention, when domestic remedies have not produced satisfaction.

Luxembourg has also ratified the amendment to article 20 of the Convention, which will allow the Committee to meet as often as it deems necessary, with the approval of the General Assembly.

With respect to reservations formulated at the time of ratification of the Convention, Luxembourg entered a reservation with respect to article 7 of the Convention, noting that the rules for succession to the Crown of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which are based on male primogeniture, are embodied in the Constitution. The constitutional provision in question has not been declared amendable to this date. Legislation to allow the lifting of the second reservation concerning the patronymic name of children (article 16) is in progress. The draft bill on the patronymic naming of children was submitted on 13 September 2001 to the Chamber of Deputies.

Formal equality for women and men is not expressly enshrined in the Constitution. The revision of article 11 (2) of the Constitution has not yet received parliamentary approval.

The latest version adopted by the Commission on Institutions and Constitutional Review reads as follows: (2) “Women and men have equal rights and duties. The State may adopt specific measures with a view to eliminating any obstacles to equality between women and men and to promoting *de facto* equality in the exercise of rights and duties.”

10. The media

The Luxembourg Commission for Ethics in Advertising has been active since 1994 on these questions. A number of complaints about the portrayal of women in advertising have been submitted to it for advice by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women. The commission's role is to express its opinion to the Ministry for the Advancement of Women. The Ministry then transmits that opinion to the advertiser and invites the advertiser to follow up where appropriate.

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women has conducted publicity campaigns through the press, radio and TV, and the Internet in order to draw public attention to the importance of equality between women and men in society. The object is to make the public aware of conventional social clichés and to hold out other models of behaviour that are more suitable to our modern way of life, and the changing of roles. As well, a radio campaign dealing with violence against women was launched in cooperation with the national police.

Since July 2002, the National Council of Women has been represented on the National Broadcasting Council.

Training courses for women in information and communication technologies (ICT) have been expanded. Multimedia training centres, called *Internetstufen*, have been established in several communes to provide training for women and men in the basic skills needed to access the knowledge society. They are user-friendly and inviting public places, supported by government, designed to ensure equal opportunities for all citizens to participate in the information society within their commune of residence, regardless of their age, social class, education level, or sex.

Gender disparities in Internet connectivity are apparent in the figures released by the Luxembourg Institute of Research and Statistics. Being actively employed is one factor that favours Internet access: 62% of people in the workforce have already surfed the net. This is

certainly one of the reasons explaining the low percentage of women who are connected (35% of women use the Internet regularly, as compared to 50% of men).

In general, whether they are working or not, 75% of men at the age of 35 are using the Internet, compared with only 50% of women. Beyond 50 years of age, the contrast is still sharper: 50% of men are still connected, but only 25% of women.

In the school system (preschool, primary and secondary schools), initiation into ICT through courses and training projects is helping to familiarize girls and boys with the world of information and communication at a younger age.

11. The environment

Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability.

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

On 30 April 1999 the Luxembourg government adopted a National Plan for Sustainable Development. Development will not be sustainable unless it can reconcile economic imperatives with ecological and social ones. An unavoidable corollary for implementing the social aspect of this plan is to incorporate the principle of gender equality. In order to take proper account of women's needs and their recommendations, based on their daily experience, it is essential that they participate in identifying the best ways to achieve sustainable development. The national plan is the responsibility of the entire community, and women will have to play an active role in it.

OBSTACLES

Implementation of the National Plan for Sustainable Development: coordinating the activities of all public and private stakeholders is difficult, because of a lack of personnel, and problems in reconciling all the stakeholders' interests.

CHALLENGE

Introduce voluntary regulations to promote a true and balanced image of women's role and potential.

12. Discrimination against girls (cf. 2) Education and training)

A Luxembourg committee on the rights of the child, known as the "*Ombuds-Comité fir d'Rechter vum Kand*" (ORK), was instituted following adoption of the law of 25 July 2002, to promote and protect the rights of children as set forth in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989, which was approved by a law of 20 December 1993, and more specifically in the context of article 2 (1 and 2) of that Convention, prohibiting all forms of discrimination, including that based on sex.

The committee has been at work since January 2003. Its role is to examine the measures adopted to protect and promote the rights of the child, to issue an opinion on laws and regulations and on

draft bills affecting the rights of the child, to receive reports and complaints concerning violations of children's rights, and to hear any child who so requests, and then, on the basis of that information, to file complaints or, for cases that it has investigated, recommendations or advice to ensure proper protection of the child's rights and interests.

Cf. 1) Poverty and social exclusion

- Inclusion and verification of guarantees of equal school access for girls and boys in each development cooperation project in the education field.
- Cooperation projects in developing countries for promoting women's groups through literacy, vocational training, and public health education.
- Promotion of gender mainstreaming and promotion of women in all development projects involving education and training policies.

PART III Institutional development: facilities and measures in place to promote gender equality and women's empowerment

Luxembourg has institutional mechanisms at three levels for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the government level:

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, created by grand ducal decree on 1 February 1995, is an independent ministry, with status equivalent to that of other ministries, and with its own budget.

The Ministry implements government policy to promote the status of women and equality between women and men, conducts relations with advisory bodies at the national and regional level, oversees interministerial coordination on sectoral policies affecting equality, conducts impact studies on legislative measures dealing with equality, and encourages affirmative-action programmes in favour of gender equality in the private sector. It conducts international policy on gender equality and supervises services and shelters for girls, women and mothers with children.

The budget of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, which stood at €3,421,178 in 1995, or 0.10% of the overall budget, has increased to €7,866,227 in 2004, representing 0.14% of the overall budget. This represents an increase of 129.93% from 1995 to 2004 in the budget for the Ministry, compared to an overall rise of 77.49% in the total government budget.

In 2004, the budget for women's services and shelters was €6,541,868, representing 83.16% of the Ministry's budget.

Luxembourg receives European subsidies for projects relating to the Council decision of 20 December 2000, under the Community's strategic framework for gender equality (2001-2005).

Thus, the Ministry for the Advancement of Women received a grant of €319,608 under the Action Plan on "Equal pay, a challenge for democratic and economic development".

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND CHALLENGES

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women is responsible for all women's issues, even in fields that exceed its technical competence. Because its title suggests an exclusive preoccupation with women, the aspect of equality between women and men is to an extent overlooked. Its commitment to gender mainstreaming requires gender skills that its officers and employees must acquire through continuous training. Adoption of a national action plan with numerical targets, a work plan and an implementation plan, with proper monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures, would allow for more focussed and effective action.

A number of partnerships have been formed to strengthen actions and measures on behalf of gender equality, involving various NGOs in the fields of decision-making, education, culture, and changing men's roles, and with unions, business organizations, and employers' and employees' chambers in the field of labour and employment.

The Interministerial Committee on Gender Equality was created by a grand ducal regulation of 31 March 1996 to examine all questions relating to gender equality, and to submit opinions, proposals or suggestions to the Minister for the Advancement of Women. As part of its mission, the committee is consulted on all draft legislation that could impact gender equality. It examines the consequences for women and men and the gender neutrality of wording. Committee members maintain liaison on equality matters between the committee and their home departments or ministries. They receive documentation and information necessary to their mission and they distribute within their Ministry any information on suggestions they think would be useful for achieving gender equality.

In order to implement the recommendations from the 23rd special session of the General Assembly (Beijing + 5), the government adopted on 29 June 2001 a framework strategy and a national plan of action for gender equity policy during the period 2001-2005. This new commitment complements the 2000 action plan and the Interministerial Committee is responsible for monitoring its implementation, and for making specific proposals for its application. The committee's objectives are as follows:

- To create awareness of the equality issue at all levels of policymaking.
- To integrate the principle of gender equality into all policies and programmes (“mainstreaming” the equality principle as an interdisciplinary approach).
- Publicizing equality policy.

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women provides secretarial support for the Interministerial Committee.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND CHALLENGES

The committee was scarcely consulted before the bills were submitted to the Council of Government, nor were its opinions included in the legislative documents. The committee needs to be strengthened in its mission with the crosscutting skills that its members can contribute from their respective ministries.

The Women's Labour Committee, instituted by order of the Grand Duke in 1984 and placed in 1995 under the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, is an advisory body on issues relating to the professional training and advancement of women. It may undertake studies at its own initiative or at government request, and it may make proposals to the government or to the Ministry on any matter that it considers relevant for improving the status of women. The committee is composed of representatives of women's associations, employers' organizations, the broader-based labour unions, and government representatives appointed by the Minister for the Advancement of Women.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND CHALLENGES

The above remarks concerning the opinions of the Interministerial Committee apply also to those issued by the Women's Labour Committee.

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women covers the committee's research and publication expenses, and provides it with secretarial services. Members of the committee receive an attendance honorarium.

The Affirmative Action Committee, instituted by order of the Grand Duke on 25 October 1999, issues opinions on subsidies for any affirmative action project undertaken by the private sector. The Minister for the Promotion of Women appoints its members from government and from the professional chambers, and the Ministry provides secretarial support. Members receive an attendance honorarium.

At the parliamentary level:

The Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on Equality of Opportunity between Men and Women and the Advancement of Women was instituted in 1996.

According to Chapter 5 (“Committees”) of the Rules of Procedure of the Chamber of Deputies (20 June 2000), the Chamber establishes permanent committees for each session, determining their number, designation and responsibilities. The Committee for Equality of Opportunity between Men and Women is one such committee.

The committee examines draft bills and proposals, amendments and motions referred to it by the President of the Chamber. It also has the right to put forward its own proposals and amendments. It prepares debates, and holds both public and closed hearings. It proposes an annual orientation debate on one or more themes relating to gender equality: in 2001 that theme was domestic violence; in 2002, the gender dimension in education, training and employment; in 2003, the economic and social situation of women.

In 2004 the committee selected the monitoring of parliamentary activities as the topic for its orientation debate, believing that it would be useful to prepare a balance sheet at the end of the legislative session and to see whether orientation debates of previous years had contributed to improving the status of women. The commission concluded that those debates have certainly helped to improve the status of women within Luxembourg society, recognizing that the initiatives, recommendations and conclusions of the Chamber of Deputies have often prompted the government to pursue an active and coherent policy for equality.

The parliamentary committee limits its intervention to examining legislative bills and proposals that deal with gender equality. Integrating the gender dimension into the activities of other parliamentary committees remains a challenge.

At the municipal level:

The communes have established advisory committees to give citizens input into the preparation and monitoring of municipal decisions.

In 1995 the National Council of Women (a women's NGO established in 1975, representing 12 women's associations, for the purpose of defending and promoting women's interests at all levels

of private, public and working life, and to promote gender equality) launched a programme entitled “Promoting a municipal policy for equality of opportunity between women and men”, in collaboration with the Luxembourg branch of the European network, “Women in Decision-making”, with the sponsorship of the Minister for the Advancement of Women, the Minister of Labour and Employment, and the Minister of the Interior, and the support of the Union of Cities and Communes (SYLVICOL). That initiative called upon the communes to promote equal opportunities for men and women, to identify and address de facto inequalities between women and men, to improve the status of women in society, to facilitate women's entry into the workforce, and to promote balanced participation by women and men in the decision-making process at all levels of political, economic, social and cultural life. To achieve these aims, it recommended the establishment of such mechanisms as equality delegates, advisory committees on equal opportunity consisting of at least 50% women and chaired by a woman, and, in the larger communes, equal opportunity offices staffed by trained and salaried personnel. The programme is coordinated with SYLVICOL, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry for the Advancement of Women. The results to date are encouraging : in 2003, 78 communes, representing 34.75% of the total, appointed an equality delegate, and 40 communes, or 59%, instituted an advisory committee on equal opportunity, or an office on the status of women. In total, 88 communes (74.57%) of the 118 communes in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg have established at least one of the equality mechanisms mentioned above.

To recognize the commitment of the communes, the Minister for the Advancement of Women awards a prize each year to the commune with the best municipal record concerning gender equality. It is awarded following a competition organized by the Ministry, and the selection is made by a jury consisting of delegates from various ministries and from the National Council of Women.

Political action for equality is strengthened by collaboration among all these structures. Yet the subject is not fully integrated into all activities, as the government's commitment under the Beijing + 5 action plan implies it should be. The strategy should include basic indicators, and a specific agency should be given responsibility for monitoring and evaluating activities.

The law on violence described in the first part of this report constitutes an example of effective interaction among various stakeholders: NGOs, the Chamber of Deputies, and government. In this case, it was NGOs that took the initiative to sensitize political parties; the Chamber of Deputies voted unanimously to invite the government to propose legislation; and the government proposed a bill that was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies. Cooperation between the authorities and the victims' assistance services and NGOs helps to make enforcement of this law effective.

PART IV Main challenges and plans to address them over the next 10 years

Previous chapters have described a number of measures that have produced progress towards achieving equality between women and men. Yet it is clear that in each field there is still a need for targeted measures to promote a change of culture in favour of equality and to achieve legal and de facto equality between women and men.

This section proposes a series of measures to this end. They are likely however to be adapted, amended and supplemented after the legislative elections of 13 June 2004.

Some of the objectives are established in European policies on gender equality:

- A female employment rate of at least 60% by 2010.
- Childcare services covering at least 90% of children between the age of 3 and compulsory school age, and 33% of children under 3 years, by 2010.
- Increasing job opportunities, especially for women, the elderly, youth, and immigrants.
- Reducing the gender differentials in the labour market.
- Reforming existing legislation on equal treatment of the sexes with respect to access to employment, vocational training, conditions of promotion and work, and regulations governing social security.

Any proposal to prepare an action plan must include an objective, with numerical targets as appropriate, a work plan, implementation measures, and evaluation.

1. Poverty and social exclusion

(a) Female participation in the labour market: a factor for combating social exclusion and poverty.

- Diversified initial vocational training:
 - Non-traditional trades and professions.
 - New information and communication technologies.
 - Continuous training recognized and certified, capitalizable units for professional qualification.
- Support for entrepreneurship through a system of microcredits targeted at female entrepreneurs.
- More childcare services.

(b) Personalizing social security rights:

- Continue with introduction of a personalized system.
- Splitting pension rights for persons not eligible for the personalized system.
- Analyzing social security and taxation provisions from the gender perspective (taxing the joint income of couples).

(c) Analysis and evaluation of the national action plan for inclusion, from the gender perspective (impact of measures, statistics broken down by sex).

- (d) Indicative programmes for cooperation with integration of the gender aspect:
- Specific actions favouring women in the fields of education, initial and continuing vocational training, health, economic participation, and economic and political decision-making.
 - Having men take more responsibility for parenthood and sharing family tasks.

2. Education and training

- (a) Diversify education and vocational choices:
- For girls, towards the technical and scientific fields.
 - For boys, towards the education and social fields.
- (b) Initial or continuous training in gender issues for:
- Teaching personnel at all levels of education.
 - Special-education personnel.
 - Education and vocational guidance personnel.
- (c) Promoting women's participation in education and training throughout life:
- Recognition and diversification of continuing vocational training for women seeking to re-enter the labour market after a career pause.
 - Strengthening participation by women, and particularly by older women, in the information society.

3. Health

- (a) Reproductive health:
- Sex education of young people to encourage shared responsibility.
 - More information on the transmission of venereal diseases and HIV/AIDS.
- (b) Analysis of the medical care system from the gender perspective.
- (c) Strengthening of the mammography programme.

4. Violence

- (a) Preparation of a national action plan for non-violence in the fields of:
- Education.
 - Labour and employment.
 - Private life.
 - Prostitution and trafficking in women.
 - The media.
 - Development cooperation

5. Conflict situations

- (a) Awareness, information, training in gender mainstreaming and in mediation for those actively engaged in international efforts.
- (b) Integration of the gender dimension into all projects and programmes for developing countries.
- (c) Stronger relations with international organizations in the context of Official Development Assistance

6. Economic life

- (a) Diversification of academic and vocational choices :
 - For girls, towards the technical and scientific fields.
 - For boys, towards the educational and social fields.
- (b) Continuous training in gender aspects for education and vocational guidance counsellors.
- (c) Reduction or elimination of the wage gap.
- (d) More childcare services
- (e) Steady progress within businesses towards:
 - Social responsibility in job maintenance, work organization, and reconciling family and working life.
 - Responsibility for gender equality in the fields of:
 - Wage equity.
 - Combating sexual harassment.
 - Promotion to decision-making positions.
 - Vocational training (individual and collective access).
- (f) Giving labour unions a greater role in promoting gender equality, through:
 - Collective bargaining.
 - Work organization plans.
 - The role of equality delegates.
 - Promotion in general, and promotion to decision-making positions.

7. Decision-making

- (a) Discuss the introduction of quotas or parity rules in electoral lists.
- (b) Provide specific financial support to political parties that make an effort to recruit women, promote them, and name them to decision-making positions.
- (c) Conduct research on women's participation in political and economic decision-making.

- (d) Encourage public and private sector firms to strive for balanced participation by women in decision-making through affirmative-action programmes.
- (e) Promote gender equality in decision-making positions through media campaigns in all fields and at all levels.
- (f) Employ a top-down strategy via institutional mechanisms.

8. Promotion mechanisms

Institutional mechanisms for applying a top-down strategy.

A strong commitment by government to achieving legal and de facto equality between women and men, and eliminating inequalities between women and men, by:

- Strengthening institutional mechanisms for involving women from the outset in legislative procedures and actions.
- Strengthening research in gender issues in all fields, with data disaggregated by sex.
- Establishing an action plan with targets, a plan for implementation of the measures defined, and evaluation.
- Establishing an independent agency for gender equality to promote, analyze, oversee and support gender equality and to combat gender discrimination.
- Promoting gender mainstreaming and specific measures or affirmative action at all political levels, national and local.

9. Exercise of fundamental rights

- Inscribe the principle of equality between women and men in the Constitution.

10. The media

- Prepare an action plan on gender equality, in cooperation with the media (press, radio and television).
- Prepare an action plan to strengthen women's participation in the information society.

11. The environment

Integrate the gender dimension explicitly into the sustainable development plan and ensure that measures are analyzed and implemented from a gender perspective.

12. Discrimination against girls

Strengthen cooperation with agencies working to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child.