

PORTUGAL

REVIEW AND APPRAISAL IN THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN 2005

Portugal 2004

Part One – Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment

The most significant changes in legislation in the area of equality between men and women occurred after 1974, with the change to a democratic regime in Portugal, and so they were prior to 1995. Therefore, one may say that most of the demands made by the Platform for Action in the legal area were already fulfilled by Portuguese law. However, improvements have been made and new programs developed.

Where gender violence is concerned, some situations described in the Platform do not occur in Portugal, such as honor crimes, early marriages, or different regulations governing inheritance and land rights for men and women. The traffic in women and children is a different matter. With the recent immigration increase in Europe, there is a substantial growth in the number of women and children trafficked. This problem has been tackled in detail in the answer to the Secretary General request of a report on the action taken on the G.A. Resolution 57/176 of 18 September.

There are not any new (after 1995) obstacles to the implementation of the principle of equality between men and women: as a matter of fact, the obstacles are the same (the slow change in popular culture, attitudes and behaviors, the lack of social structures allowing the reconciliation of private and professional life, etc.). Those obstacles have not disappeared yet, at least in a meaningful way, and we are still handling very strong stereotyping of male and female social roles. New stereotypes have appeared, though, like the super-woman that is able to handle everything, from professional work to the care of children and political intervention. One of the ideas we have now to deal with is some influential opinion makers that defend gender equality is no longer a problem.

Anyhow, the concern about questions of gender equality and improvement of women situation has been progressively looked at in terms of a democratic request and involving a dimension that is all together more global and systematic.

One might say that, since the end of the 90’s decade, a qualitative change in the way these questions are looked at has been registered. The approach to gender equality is now seen as the protection and promotion of the human rights of women.

Basic matters relative to the situation of women - their access to public and political life; their situation in the employment market; the feminization of poverty; the questions of violence, domestic or in the public places - all these aspects were, and are, faced as reflections of the women’s enjoyment of fundamental rights.

In spite of all this, and bearing in mind the new conscience developed that is finding translation at political orientations levels, the actual situation is not always in agreement with these principles. And, if in many issues there are signs of change, in others there is also a visible resistance to change.

Overview of trends in achieving gender equality and women's advancement

Achievements

In 1997 and **for the very first time**, a **Global Plan for Equal Opportunities** was approved, on March 6th, by Resolution of the Council of Ministers n° 49/97 with 7 objectives:

1. To mainstream the principle of equal opportunities for men and women in all economic, social and cultural policies.
2. To prevent violence and guarantee proper protection to women who are victims of crimes of violence.
3. Promotion of equal opportunities in employment and in labor relations.
4. Rereconciliation of private and professional life.
5. Social protection of the family and of maternity.
6. Health.
7. Education, science and culture.

A **Second National Plan for Equality** - 2003-2006 – was approved on November 6, 2003). This new Plan is more ambitious, with concrete measures, a schedule, and a mechanism for monitoring and assessment.

The Plan has two main axes:

- Structural measures, aimed at changing Public Administration culture at all levels, so that gender mainstreaming becomes an effective and normal tool for every agent, particularly at the stage of the elaboration of different policies and programmes, as well in its execution and assessment.
- Policy Sector measures, that come in four big areas:
 1. *Professional and private life*: Work, employment, maternity and paternity protection and reconciliation of professional and family life.
 2. *Education, information and training*: Education and professional training; reproductive and sexual health; culture; sports; media.
 3. *Citizenship and social inclusion*: empowerment and decision making; poverty and social inclusion; immigrant women and ethnic and cultural minorities; violence against women.
 4. *Co-operation with Portuguese speaking countries. (CPLP)*

Although the responsibility for the implementation of this Plan belongs to both national equality mechanisms, this responsibility is shared with several ministries. (see Part Three)

In 1999, The **First National Plan Against Domestic Violence** was approved on June 11.

In 2003, the **Second Plan Against Domestic Violence** (2003-2006) was approved on July 7.

This Second Plan is organized in seven main chapters, which include several concrete measures:

1. Information, awareness raising and prevention;
2. Training;
3. Legislation and its enforcement;
4. Victims protection and social integration;
5. Research;
6. Immigrant women;
7. Evaluation and assessment.

The Commission for Equality and Women's Rights is entrusted with the coordination, follow-up and execution of all the measures included in this Plan. As such, it will guarantee the close co-operation with the ministries more directly involved in the implementation of its measures.

The 1976 Portuguese Constitution was revised by Constitutional Law no 1/97 of 20th September. (See answers to the questionnaire for the preparation of the 23d Special Session of the General Assembly).

The 1998 the **National Plan for Employment** foresees a Pillar IV - equal opportunities - and presents a perspective of mainstreaming in the other 3 ones (See answers to the questionnaire for the preparation of the 23d Special Session of the General Assembly).

Pillar IV has 4 goals:

- to fight discrimination between men and women in order to reduce the gap between female and male unemployment rate and to increase female employment rate, specially in areas where they are under-represented;
- to reconcile private and professional life, increasing the access to care services;
- to favor the reintegration into active life of long-term unemployed persons, detecting and removing the obstacles to that reintegration;
- to favor the insertion into active life of disabled persons, paying special attention to the difficulties they may find;

The revision of this Plan for 2002 keeps the same strategic goals, among which is the increase of women's participation in the labor market and of men's participation in family responsibilities. A prior objective remains the fight against horizontal and vertical segregation in the labor market.

In 2003 revision, December 3, the Portuguese Government assumes to attain an employment rate above 60% for women, target defined for 2010 in the Lisbon Summit. The revision of this Plan keeps gender mainstreaming as a priority.

Reading the list above, one can say that the concept of equal opportunity has gradually entered most of the domains of political concerns and Government actions.

Part II: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

In order to meet the concerns of the Beijing Platform of Action, the Portuguese Government has approved a Global Plan for Equal Opportunities in March 1997, now followed by the II National Plan for Equality (2003-2006) and a first and second Plan against Domestic Violence. Migrant women are considered in this Plan, namely in the implementation of specific projects and in general information on their rights while in Portuguese soil.

CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN of the Beijing Platform of Action:

- **Women and poverty**

Decree-Law n°307/97, of November 11 (VII) determined the application of the principle of **equal treatment between men and women in the professional systems of social security**, namely the ones that ensure protection against risks of illness, disability, old age, including early-retirement, accidents at work, professional diseases, unemployment, and social welfare and family allowances. These systems take the form of allowances aiming at complementing allowances granted by social security or at replacing them, whether the registration in these systems is compulsory or not.

The non compliance of the obligations established by this legislation as well as the non elimination of existing discriminations in the professional systems constitutes a court procedure punishable with fines. The Regional Social Security Authorities are competent to apply these fines.

Furthermore, important measures of a technical and normative nature, within the scope of the specific regulation of death allowances, have been adopted, and a global reformulation of the legal system that was in force was undertaken, through the introduction of various improvements, the most important of which is the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women.

Law n°19-A/96, of June 29, regulated by Decree-Law n°196/97, of July 31, should also be mentioned. It establishes the first legislative framework aimed at guaranteeing the right to a minimum income.

Despite the fact that this right has a very wide field of application, the number of women benefiting from it is very significant.

The guaranteed income consists of a cash benefit, attributed by the non-contributive social security system, which is granted in close co-operation with social integration programs.

The right to this benefit is granted to persons legally residing in the national territory, whose income, their own or of others living in the family household, is inferior to the established limit.

The concept of family household includes the spouse or the person living in a common law marriage for more than a year, or underage relatives.

In 2000, the Law of the Guaranteed Minimum Income entered into force.

Such as the previous law, the principle of the equality, considered as the non discrimination of beneficiaries for any reason, namely on the grounds of sex, is established in the Law number 17/2000 of 8th August.

Some of those changes regard the social insertion component of this measures, aiming to adjust programs to the situation of the people concerned and their families, with a view to create conditions to an autonomous social and economic life in the future.

Some data on Women and Guaranteed Minimum income

According to data referring to the first semester 2003, women constitute 69% of all benefited by this income, which shows their increased vulnerability to poverty. The beneficiaries of this income are the following types of families:

Family Type	Number	%
Couple with no children	1 582	7,5
Couple with children	9 774	46,7
More than couple with children	1 125	5,4
Single Parent - Woman	5 563	26,6
Single Parent – Man	310	1,5
Woman alone	1 148	5,5
Man alone	1 420	6,8
		100,0

Fonte: Social Security Statistic Data

32,1% of families receiving this benefit are either women alone or women supporting children.

National Plan for Social Inclusion

The Council of Ministers on 2001, August 6, adopted a National Plan for Social Inclusion -2001-2003, that refers, among other items, that the reconciliation of professional and family life and the equal opportunities between women and men are essential conditions for economic and social participation.

The revised National Action Plan for Inclusion, 2003-2005, has, among its principles, the recognition of the importance of equal opportunities as a guarantee for the enjoyment of citizen rights, whether in public or private life. It also considers the use of a gender approach a requisite to analyze situations, find adequate answers and assess the results in its area.

In its strategic axes it includes the promotion of *de facto* equality, in the public and private sphere, pointing to a gender social contract that should be a condition for democracy, a precondition for citizenship and a guarantee for autonomy and individual freedom. One of its main challenges remains the reconciliation between professional and private life, and the priorities for social inclusion include gender mainstreaming.

- **Education and training of women**

Female illiteracy including elder women

Between 1991 e 2001 the general illiteracy rate passed from 11% to 9%. Illiteracy is much higher among the elderly, 55 years or more, because mandatory education is rather recent in Portugal (only after 1974). In this population, illiteracy is much higher in women, since a few decades ago the cultural order excluded many girls from the school system.

Among younger people, on the contrary, and given the fact that girls do better in school, the percentage of illiterate women is smaller than men's.

There are no significant changes in education of girls and boys. The guarantee of equal opportunities, with regard to the access to all levels of education, has meant that girls, in Portugal, have obtained higher levels of educational achievement and a diversification of choices at the level of medium and higher courses.

For example, the rates of progression/conclusion by gender and level of education are the following (1999-2000 data):

Female participation, in percentage, in applications in diverse levels of education)

Education level	Feminization ratings
Nursery school	49,3
Regular Basic School	48,3
1° grade	48,2
2° grade	47,1
3° grade	49,1
Secondary School	52,4
General Studies	55,9
Technological Studies	42,9
Vocational Studies level 3	44,5
Visual Arts	59,2
12° Grade – teaching	48,3
Higher Education ¹	56,5
Bachelor	63,1
Bachelor+Licenciatura	47,3
Licenciatura	58,7
CESE	65,0

Post-graduation	62,5
Master	54,0
Ph.d	45,8

Source: *Statistics on Education 1999/2000*.

Vocational training

Women's vocational training has been increasing steadily in the last ten years. In order to facilitate women's training in after working hours schedules, several Training Centers have foreseen childcare facilities to function during the training hours.

Trainee's distribution by sex and kind of training - 2002

Type of Training	N. Trainees		
	MEN	WOME N	TOTAL (2)
Apprenticeship	16.977	9.934	26.911
Qualified Training aimed at integration in the labor market	3.694	3.052	6.746
Education and Training for Youngsters with low normal schooling	1.240	640	1.880
Training along the lifecycle	20.633	17.019	37.652
Vocational training for the unemployed	5.770	13.735	19.505
Courses of Education and Training for Adults/ Unemployed socio-professionals	303	2.394	2.697
Training for Trainers	2.260	2.018	4.278
Training for disadvantage groups	2.144	1.581	3.725
Courses of Education and Training for Adults / Disadvantaged social-professionals with certification	155	545	700
Other measures: Programs of Training/employment (*)	13	108	121
Other measures: Training in management – Modules of Management (*)	14	37	51
Other measures	7.678	5.179	12.857
Total	60.881	56.242	117.123

Source: *Institute for Employment and Vocational Training*

Obs. This data concerns training in Employment Centers, Vocational Training Centers of direct and participated management.

Women and ICT

A survey on the use of ICT for the Portuguese Population refers 45% of women using computers compared to 52% men. As for the Internet use there is a similar gap: 27% women and 34% men.

Nevertheless, among the younger generation there is a significant increase of ICT using among young women. This situation reverses after 34 years old.²

According to the publication *Sociedade da Informação – Principais Indicadores estatísticos 1995-2001 Portugal*, in higher education the rate of women taking courses in Computer Sciences is not optimistic: the percentage of women taking these courses is 25.6% of the total, which represents no evolution since 1996. Still, in 2001/2002 there were 36.4% of women finishing the course, which seems to be an encouraging number, although the statistics cannot be compared since they come from different sources.

- **Women and health**

Portuguese Constitution Guarantees equal health rights for all in its National Health Service. Official policy considers family planning a human right and not a measure of health or demographic policy. Option on contraceptive methods is a personal decision of the woman, and infertility treatment is considered a component of family planning.

Decree-law n.259/2000 of 17th October regulates Law 120/99 of 11th August that strengthened guarantees of the right to reproductive health, defining conditions for the promotion of sexual education and establishing access conditions of youngsters to health care in the scope of sexuality and family.

Volunteer sterilization, whether female or male, can only be chosen by persons more than 25 years old. Medical doctors have the right to conscience objection to this procedure.

Special attention is being given to teenage pregnancy which is still high in Portugal, 6.1% of the total births. In order to confront this problem the National Plan for Equality foresees some special measures in the districts with high incidence of these phenomena.

Law 12/2001 of 29 May regulates emergency contraception, which constitutes the use by women of anti-conception pills on the first 72 hours after sexual intercourse without protection.

The Portuguese Parliament passed a Resolution n.57/2002 17th October determining the evaluation and assessment of the practice related to laws on family planning, sexual education and volunteer interruption of pregnancy.

Some meaningful data

In 2001 the total number of medical doctors was 33 233, of which 18 134 were men and 15 099 women. The number of women MD tends to increase. As for nurses, the total number was 40 130, of which 7537 were men and 32 593 women³. 99.2% of the total births take place in health

² The use of ICT in the Home – 2001. National Institute for Statistics, 15 de March 2002.

³ Social Portugal 1991-2001, NIS.

institutions.

In 2002, 837 cases of HIV/AIDS were diagnosed. Since 1983, of the 10 473 registered cases of AIDS,

1 767 were diagnosed on women (16.9%). The number of women infected is growing, and a plan is being designed to face the fact.

In 2001 the most frequent cause of women's death was cardiovascular disease (44.1% women to 33.3% men). Men's cause of death was more related to car accidents, and cancer.

According to the last National Survey on Health (1998-1999), 33.9% of women consider their health status very good or good, against 49.5% of men. 24.2% of the women inquired consider their health bad or very bad, whether only 15.2% of the men are of the same opinion.

The distribution of diseases according to sex is as follows:

Disease	Women	Men	Total
Diabetes	58,2	41,8	100,0
Asthma or related bronchitis	53,7	46,3	100,0
Chronic bronchitis	52,0	48,0	100,0
Allergies	61,1	38,9	100,0
High blood pressure	63,2	36,8	100,0
Back aches	60,5	39,5	100,0

Fonte: *Inquérito Nacional de Saúde (1998/1999)*, Instituto Nacional de Estatística

- **Violence Against Women**

- Crimes	Number of offenders	Number of convicted
<i>Crimes against life</i>		
First and second degree murder	63	56
manslaughter	318	210
Attempted murder	31	19
<i>Crimes against physical integrity</i>		
Simple physical offence	4 412	1 419
Qualified aggravated physical offence	118	70
Physical offence through neglect	304	89
Wife, children and disabled battering	243	115
<i>Crimes against personal freedom:</i>		
Threats and coercion	734	224
<i>Crimes against freedom and sexual offence</i>		
Rape simple and aggravated	60	42
Rape using authority	12	7
Sexual abuse, coercion and fraud	41	21
Sexual abuse and coercion from a position of authority	3	
Traffic of persons and exploitation of prostitution of others	13	4
Crimes against honor ⁴	795	213

Source: Office of Legal Police and Planning of the Ministry of Justice, 2001. One of the main obstacles to women's enjoyment of human rights and fundame

ntal freedoms is gender violence, namely in the family. The Government's concern with this fact has led to the approval of a Second Plan to combat Domestic Violence⁵. The data collected to design this plan is as follows:

CEWR ordered a study from a research centre of the New University of Lisboa on "The Social context of violence against women, in victims examined in the Institute of Legal Medicine in Coimbra and Oporto during year 2000". According to the data collected, physical violence accounted for 83% of the cases, the family home is the most likely place for the occurrence of violent acts against women, 67.2%, and in 95.3% of the cases children witness the violent acts.; in 36, 7% of the cases the battering was going on for more than ten years and in 70, 5% of the cases the aggressor was the husband. The women attributed the aggression to jealousy (44,4%) and alcoholism (19,7).

Regarding the protection of victims, Act 61/91, of 31 August, has provided for a number of measures to protect women victims of violence in general (including information campaigns, publication of a handbook for women victims of violence, creation of a telephone hotline and the setting up of specialized units within police stations to receive women victims of violence). Act 107/99, of 3 August, created a national network of women shelters (each composed by one shelter and support services), but none is specifically targeted to women victims of traffic. In 2001, there were 26 shelters operating throughout the country, benefiting a total of 2632 women.

⁴ These crimes of honour do not have to do with murder charges but with moral offenses.

⁵ See Introduction for National Plan Against Domestic Violence.

CEWR runs a legal aid department for women and a toll free phone line working 24 hours a day that gives information and support to victims of violence. In 2003 it received 3853 calls.

Women shelters are mostly run by women’s NGO with the support of the Ministry for Labor and Social Security. Many local authorities have been supporting these shelters supplying the houses and the installation equipment.

- **Women and armed conflict**

In this matter, there is not much to be said. In fact, Portugal has had the benefit of enjoying peace for thirty years. In all the missions that the Portuguese Army or Portuguese Police forces have had abroad in the scope of NATO or the United Nations, women have been included.

- **Women and the economy**

Women entrepreneurs are represented in AMEP – Associação das Mulheres Empresárias de Portugal (Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Portugal) – a very active Association created with the aim of contributing to reduce inequalities affecting the Portuguese women entrepreneurs, as woman and as entrepreneurs, through the elaboration of studies, participation in conferences and seminars, celebration of protocols with other entrepreneurial associations and banking institutions and providing Cabinets for juridical support and entrepreneurial projects. This Association is member of EFCM (Femmes Chefs d’Entreprises Mondiales). According to its studies in 1998 there were 350 000 to 400 000 entrepreneurs women in Portugal.

Some data on women’s employment

In Portugal the female activity rate in the economy is traditionally high and has been increasing steadily in the last ten years. From 2000 to 2002 it increased 1%.

	2000	2002
Female activity rate	44,9%	45,9%
Male activity rate	57,7%	58,2%
Female unemployment rate	5,0%	6,1%
Male unemployment rate	3,2%	4,2%
Female rate in the labour force	45,6%	45,7%
Female rate in employment	44,5%	45,2%
Female rate in unemployment	56,6%	55,2%

Source: *Employment Survey* (annual average, 2000, 2002), INE.

Unemployment rates have been growing due to today’s economic crisis, and women’s

unemployment grew from 5% in 2000 to 6.1% in 2002. The male unemployment rate also grew from 3.2% to 4.2% in 2002.

The structural sexual segregation of the labor market, horizontal and vertical, remained the same, but there have been some decrease in the salary gap.

Vertical Segregation

Profession	Women		Men		Female rates (%)
	thousands	%	thousands	%	
Executives in Public Administration and private firms. Directors.	108,6	4,7	260,9	9,3	29,4
Experts in intellectual and scientific professions	201,1	8,7	141,1	5,0	58,8
Middle level technicians and Professional Administration staff	164,5	7,1	207,4	7,4	44,2
Sales people and other staff	303,2	13,1	183,2	6,6	62,3
Farmers and qualified workers in agriculture and fishing	465,0	20,2	236,4	8,5	66,3
Labourers, draftsmen and similar workers	283,7	12,3	289,1	10,3	49,5
Assembling, installing and machine operators	243,3	10,5	844,5	30,2	22,4
Non qualified workers	102,0	4,4	337,4	12,1	23,2
Army Forces	436,8	18,9	268,4	9,6	61,9
	2,1	0,1	27,8	1,0	7,0
		100,0		100,0	

Source: *Employment survey* (annual average, 2002), INE.

Horizontal Segregation

Sectors	% of women	% of men
Building	4,2	95,8
Hotels and restaurants	61,1	39,0
Transportation, storage and communication	20,3	79,7
Health and social services	82,1	17,9
Education	78,8	21,2
Other activities in collective, social and personal services	58,5	41,4

Source: *Employment Survey* (annual average, 2002), NIS.

Employment Discrimination

Several laws forbid any distinctions in recruitment and employment practices between women and men. Still, some discrimination exist in practice and so Act n.9/2001, de 21st May enhances the competence of the General Inspection of Labor to inspect, identify and punish discrimination and gives an enlarged importance to the Recommendations of Commission for Equality in Work and Employment.

CEWE has also promoted several projects in the area of equal opportunities for women and men. Since 2001, CEWE has taken part in nine EQUAL projects (a European Commission Program to fight any forms of discrimination and inequality related to the labor market).

Equal pay

Women are entitled by law to receive equal pay for equal work or work of the same value as that performed by men (article 9, Decree-law 392/79 20th September). Inequalities still persist and are very difficult to deal with. In 1992 there was a salary gap of 23.8% in men's favour, and today's salary gap is 22.6 %.

In 2002 and 2003 CEWE promoted a project, financed by the Portuguese Government and the European Union, called "Guarantee rights in salary equality". It aimed at reducing or eliminating salary gaps through legislation in member states of the EU and EEE and promote efficacy in the mechanism of law application.

These project conclusions were:

- ✓ Suggestion to change some rules in order to better guarantee equal pay between women and men;
- ✓ National experts from partners' countries (Ireland, Norway, Italy and Luxemburg) and EU agencies (European Commission, Court of Justice) compiled guidelines for law enforcers (magistrates, labor inspector, lawyers, and equality mechanisms experts).
- ✓ Training guidelines were designed for applicants to train in this area.

- **Women in power and decision making**

The percentage of women in the Parliament and in Government has been increasing in a very slow pace since 1995. In 1995 there were 12.2% of women in the Parliament, and in March 2002 election the percentage of elected women was 19, 6%. The Government, in 1995, had six women members in 58 positions (12.06%), and in the present day Government there are seven women in fifty two positions (13.5%). In the elections for local mayors, the percentage of women grew from 3.9% in 1997 to 5.2% in 2001.

As for the female representation among Portuguese Parliament members to the European Parliament, it increased from 8%, in 1984, to 20% in 1999.

In 2001, the percentage of women judges was 40.8% and 46% of Public Prosecutors were women.

- **Human rights of women**

In Portugal, formally, women enjoy all the human rights. The major obstacle to the full enjoyment of these rights is gender violence, which is being fought against in several fronts, prevention, awareness raising campaigns and training of justice, social workers, police officials and shelters for survivors. All of these actions are an integral part of the Second National Plan Against Domestic Violence.

- **Women and the media**

The CEWR has taken part in a project, together with equality mechanisms from Spain, Italy and France, that included several universities from these four countries, that put together a publication on “Guidelines to eliminate gender stereotypes from the media and publicity”. These guidelines include a brief analysis of stereotyping in the media of these European countries and contain check lists and other tools to help recognize gender stereotypes. It has been introduced to some national media and there is a program scheduled to work with journalists and communication students.

On the other hand, National Plan for Equality contains several policy measures pertaining to the problem of stereotypes, whether in the field of education (school books, pedagogical practices, etc.), or directly with media professionals.

- **Women and the environment**

There is a large percentage of women taking part in environment protection and ecologist NGO in Portugal. There is a Green Party represented in Parliament, just by one member, who is a woman.

- **The girl-child**

There are no special problems with girl children in Portugal. Girls attend the same schools at all levels with boys, apart from a different socialization that has to do with family education, community traditions, and schooling.

PART THREE: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

National Equality Mechanisms

Financial resources?

As stated in the last report, Decree-Law n°166/91, of May 9, set up the **Commission for Equality and Women's Rights (CEWR)**, which is one of the national mechanisms for equality. It replaced the previous Commission on the Status of Women, created in 1977.

Its fundamental and permanent objectives are:

- to promote equal opportunities, rights and dignity for women and men;
- to promote effective co-responsibility of women and men in all aspects of family, professional, social, cultural, economic and political life;
- to encourage society to regard maternity and paternity as of fundamental social importance and to accept the responsibilities resulting there from.

The CEWR, a Government agency, is located in the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. In spite of today's restrictive budget policy the CEWR, budget was increased in 17.1% between 2002 and 2003. We believe that the two national plans approved will mobilize considerable human and financial resources in most state departments.

The percentage of the budget of the Commission for Equality and for Women's Rights of the overall budget was 0.0037% in 1999, 0.0044% in 2002, 0.0039% in 2003, and 0.0029% in 2004.

The second national mechanism, **Commission for Equality in Work and Employment**, was created in 1979. It is a tri-party entity and is now under both the direction of the Ministry of the Presidency and the Ministry for Work and Social Security. Its tasks are information, dissemination, training, and evaluation of complaints of discrimination, drawing up reports on these matters, which are sent to interested parties and published in the Bulletin of the Ministry for Labor and Social Security. It is compulsory to the employers to ask the legal opinion of this Commission before the dismissal of pregnant, puerperal or breast-feeding women. The legal opinion is given in 30 days. If the opinion is negative, only a court of law may authorize the dismissal. To ask the opinion of this Commission is also compulsory for employers who don't agree with the proposal of reduced timetables that women and men with small children that have the right to this benefit. It also may recommend legislative alterations or propose measures related to equal opportunities in employment, work and in vocational training.

The formative and informative activities developed by the Commission for Equality in Work and Employment (CEWE) have as their target the general public and some strategic groups in order to achieve mainstreaming. Among these groups are social negotiators, entrepreneurs, trade-unionists, jurists working for associations of employers or trade unions, human resource managers, civil servants, magistrates, lawyers, trainers and local elected officers.

Autonomous Regions

Regional Legislative Decree n°18/97/A, 4th November, (Autonomous Region of the **Azores**), created the **Regional Consultative Commission for the Defense of Women's Rights**.

Regional Decree n°16/97/M, 8th August (Autonomous Region of **Madeira**), approved the statutes of the Regional Labor Department, which also established an **Office for Matters of Equality, European Union Labor Issues and Documentation**.

Government Members Responsible for Equality

In 1996, the position of High Commissioner for Equality and Family Matters was created, and was made responsible for gender equality mechanisms. In 1999, it was substituted by a Minister for Equality that remained until 2001. Then, the Minister was replaced by a Secretary of State for Equality.

Since the last Government changed, in 2002, equality mechanisms depend from the Minister of the Presidency.

The Second National Plan for Equality establishes a mainstreaming approach for gender equality matters and each ministry has a representative which is also the focal point in its area. These equality focal points, which we call Councilors for Equality, are nominated by their own Minister. They must gather representatives from significant departments and establish an annual mainstreaming plan for their own ministries. This process is still ongoing and has proved to be slightly difficult.

Capacity building is done through gender equality training of the Councilors for Equality, and the CEWR is now finishing a training program on gender equality that must take place in May 2004.

It is being a big challenge to establish these focal points, and their operating capacity varies from one to other ministry, depending very much of their individual interest in this matter. Hopefully, the training course will help to motivate them.

The Ministries involved are:

- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry Interior Affairs
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Cities, Territorial Planning, and Environment.
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education
- Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Fisheries
- Ministry of National Defense
- Ministry of Economy
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Public Constructions, Transports, and Housing
Ministry of the Presidency
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Social Security and Labor
High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities

The Second National Plan for Equality foresees a Commission to monitor and evaluate its implementation progress that must be presented annually to the Minister of the Presidency. The CEWR is responsible for its coordination.

One of the network partners for the implementation of this Second National Plan for Equality is the National Institute of Statistics, which, having signed a protocol with CEWR has set up a gender equality data base, with indicators that will help to assess the implementation of the Plan and its results.

NGO's are also part of this network and they receive financial help to implement actions related to the two National Plans. NGO representatives, as well as members of the academy and researchers, also take part in the monitoring mechanisms established in both Plans.

Before their approval, both Plans have been subjected to civil society suggestions and critics and some of them were included in the Plans.

PART FOUR: MAIN CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THEM

The main challenges for the coming years have been identified and are part of the II National Plan to Fight Domestic Violence and the Second National Plan for Equality. Violence against women, gender mainstreaming, reconciliation of professional and private life, employment and poverty and women in decision making are some of the main issues.

Apart from the issues already included in the two Plans mentioned before, there is a National Plan for Employment and a National Plan for Social Inclusion, both of them containing mainstreamed gender equality measures.

An institutional reform of equality national mechanisms is foreseen for the near future.

The Government has taken some policy measures to women's professional training and employment. The results are as following:

Indicators	1995	2000	2002
Female activity rate	43%	44.9%	45.9%
Female rate in unemployment	50%	56.6%	55,2%
Salary gap	23.9% less than male's salary	23.3%	22.6%
Women M.P.	12.2%	17%	20%

As we may see in this evolution table, female activity rate has been growing steadily, although slowly, while female rate in unemployment is decreasing. As for the salary gap, it also has been decreasing.

The number of women members of Parliament has been growing steadily.

Nevertheless, women's major accomplishment has been in education and sciences, as it may be seen in Part Two.

However, we must also refer the important part women have been playing as researchers. The newest trends show women participation is also steadily growing:

Women researchers

Researchers	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Women	2558	2972	3385	3597	3809	3984	4159
Men	3292	3691	4090	4262	4434	4608	4783
Total	5850	6663	7475	7859	8242	8592	8942
% Women	43,7	44,6	45,3	45,8	46,2	46,4	46,5
% Men	56,3	55,4	54,7	54,2	53,8	53,6	53,5