

## **National Report**

**On appraisal and review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration, the Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the UN General Assembly (2000) in the context of the upcoming global review of the “Beijing+20” process in 2015**

**Bulgaria  
June, 2014**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>		<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Achievements and Challenges since Beijing 1995</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Developments on the Beijing Areas of Concern since Bulgaria's Last Update in 2009</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Data and Statistics</b>	<b>Page 49</b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Emerging Priorities</b>	<b>Page 51</b>
<b>Annex</b>	<b>Principal Publications and Weblinks</b>	<b>Page</b>

## **Introduction**

1. Equality before the law is a constitutional principle in the Republic of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian legislation warrants full equality between women and men and treats them equally in all spheres of legally regulated social relations. Women and men enjoy equal civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Non-discrimination by gender is a common goal for the whole Bulgarian legal order and is explicitly stipulated in practically all fields. There are no areas of activity reserved only for men or women. In this sense, the Bulgarian legislation is in line with the international legal obligations of the State in the field of human rights.

2. Bulgaria's membership in the EU intensified efforts for upgrading the national legislation and policies in the field of equality between women and men. EU norms in the field of gender equality and the provisions of international instruments, incl. the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and the Beijing Platform for Action constitute a part of the national legislation and are integrated in all strategic documents and policies.

3. In pursuance of the concluding documents of the Fourth World Conference, Beijing'95, in 1996, by a decision of the Government, an Intergovernmental Working Group was set up with the participation of representatives of public institutions and authorities responsible for the enforcement of women rights and a review of the compliance of Bulgarian legislation and practice with the Beijing Platform for Action was carried out. A National Action Plan was adopted, aimed at achieving de facto equality between women and men.

4. Gender equality affects all spheres of social life and economic activity in Bulgaria. An integrated gender mainstreaming approach is applied in the development and implementation of all governmental policies and strategies.

5. The national policy in the Republic of Bulgaria in the field of equality between women and men and non-discrimination by gender is a horizontal policy, coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy at a national level. A sustainable model of cooperation among institutions, social partners and the civil society has been achieved through their participation in the National Council on Gender Equality to the Council of Ministers. The minister of labour and social policy is the chairperson of the Council.

6. The strategic document of the Bulgarian government setting out the policy framework is the National Strategy for Gender Equality Promotion for the period 2009 – 2015, which was adopted in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe, the strategic documents of the European Union and the principles underlying the UN conventions on human rights and women's rights. The strategy sets out the specific objectives to be achieved in order to remove all obstacles to effective gender equality in the country.

## **Section 1      Achievements and challenges since Beijing 1995**

7. Bulgaria is a signatory to the major international statutory instruments in the field of human rights. At the beginning of the 90s Bulgaria waived all its reservations on the international instruments in the field.

8. In 2000, Bulgaria ratified the European Social Charter (revised).

9. In 2001, Bulgaria joined the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and the Supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

10. Since 2002, Bulgaria is a signatory to the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

11. On 20 September 2006, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

12. In 2007, Bulgaria joined the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking of Human Beings; in 2012 Bulgaria joined the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

13. After accession to the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, Bulgaria committed to applying the high standards pronounced in the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights of the EU.

14. In 2011, Bulgaria joined the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

15. On 26 January 2012, the National Assembly ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Optional Protocol to the Convention was signed by Bulgaria in 2008.

16. Bulgaria is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1982 and to the Optional Protocol to the Convention of 2006. In compliance of its obligations under CEDAW, on 12 July 2012 Bulgaria submitted its consolidated fourth-seventh periodic report on the measures taken and progress achieved in the application of the Convention and defended the report before the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

17. In 2012, Bulgaria presented its consolidated fourth-fifth periodic report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regarding the measures taken and progress achieved in the application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; in 2011 it presented its third periodic report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

18. In 2013, the Bulgarian Government adopted an Action Plan for implementation of the final recommendations to Bulgaria, made by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The progress achieved in the implementation of the Plan will be presented in an interim report in 2014 and in a final report in 2016 when Bulgaria should present its next periodic report on the application of CEDAW.

19. By a decision of the Government of 19 December 2013 a National Coordination Mechanism on Human Rights (NCMHR) was established. The first meeting of the NCMHR was held on 30 May 2014. The created mechanism aimed to improve coordination among public authorities and independent institutions involved in different aspects of human rights in regard to implementation of specific national tasks arising from Bulgaria's commitments on multilateral treaties in this field. The NCMHR will develop its activity with the active

participation of non-governmental organisations dealing in the field of human rights.

20. The minister of foreign affairs is the chairperson of the NCMHR. Its members are the minister of justice, the minister of labour and social policy, the minister of the interior, the minister of regional development, the minister of health, the chairperson of the State Agency for Child Protection, the president of the State Agency for Refugees, the executive director of the Agency for Social Assistance, the executive director of the Agency for Disabled People, the secretary of the National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Integration Issues to the Council of Ministers, the secretary of the National Council for Gender Equality to the Council of Ministers, the president of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination, the secretary of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the president of the Council for Electronic Media. The Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria participates as an observer. The secretariat functions of the NCMHR are performed by the Human Rights Directorate within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

21. On 4 November 2010, the first Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Bulgaria within the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) was held. 113 recommendations were made to Bulgaria in various human rights areas and the Bulgarian party accepted 106 of these. Most of the accepted recommendations are being implemented and have a direct positive impact on the way Bulgaria applies the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Bulgaria participates voluntarily in the Interim Review of the implementation of the recommendations. In June 2013, within the 23<sup>rd</sup> regular session of the HRC, Bulgaria announced the preparation of a detailed interim report on the recommendations accepted during the UPR.

22. The first Bulgarian report on the Millennium Goals was published in March 2003. It adapted the eight global goals to the levels of the country's development at the time of its preparation for European Union membership and set out indicators for tracing the progress and final goals compatible with relevant levels of EU Member States.

23. In its second report – “Millennium Development Goals – 2008”, Bulgaria, in the capacity of a country – new donor of aid for development, presented its experience gained in the years of transition to a market economy and democratic institutions. The report considers the progress in the achievement of the goals set in 2003 in the light of Bulgaria's membership in the European Union while re-setting some Bulgarian goals and indicators.

24. The eight Millennium Goals are interrelated to a great extent. In the tight competitive environment of the European Union high incomes are impossible without high-quality and competitive education. Economic progress needs a sound health care, which is an important condition for a long-lived and productive work force. In their turn, higher incomes and employment entail a better access to education, lower infant and maternal mortality, greater care for socially sensitive diseases like HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and tuberculosis, more responsibility for the environment.

25. To combine efforts of institutions in pursuing a policy of equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of the economic, political and social life in the country a National Council on Equality between Women and Men was set up in 2004. The National Council is a consultative body to the Council of Ministers for cooperation and coordination among intergovernmental authorities and non-governmental organisations in the development and implementation of the national policy on equality between women and men. The national

Council comprises top-level representatives of the executive, social partners and non-governmental organisations.

26. In pursuance of the National Strategy for Gender Promotion for the period 2009 – 2015 the government adopts annually a National Action Plan for promotion of equality between women and men, aiming to support the implementation of a uniform policy on equality between women and men, raise gender equality awareness and the importance of eliminating associated stereotypes.

27. In the National Action Plan for promoting equality between women and men in 2014 special attention has been paid on the implementation of measures for promotion of equality between women and men in the decision-making process ; building administrative capacity of the central and local administrations, the judiciary, social partners and the society as a whole and raising awareness and sensitivity on the issues of gender equality and non-discrimination, as well as taking specific steps for updating the National Strategy for Gender Promotion for the period 2009-2015 within the 2020 horizon.

## **Section 2      Developments on the Beijing areas of concern since Bulgaria's last update in 2009**

### **Critical area of concern 1. Women and poverty**

28. Poverty and social exclusion are closely related to inequality and unequal treatment, including between men and women. This reflects the fact that women are more vulnerable to poverty due to existing gender inequality in accessing the labour market, division between paid and household labour, labour pay, economic opportunities and participation, taking of managerial and governance positions, etc. The differences are most visible in the area of discrimination practises on the labour market and particularly in respect of some groups of women (pregnant women and mothers with small kids, single mothers, women from vulnerable ethnic groups).

29. According to data from the observation “Statistics on income and living conditions”, (EU-SILC), Bulgaria is among the countries in which the risk of poverty for the population is above the average EU level – 21.2%<sup>1</sup>, and that percentage is higher for women – 22.8%, than for men – 19.5%<sup>2</sup>. Compared with EU-SILC 2009<sup>3</sup>, there is a diminution in the number of those living in poverty by 0.6 p.p. (0.9 p.p. for women). The share of people living in poverty or social exclusion is 49.3%<sup>4</sup> (50.9 % for women), marking an increase of 3.1 p.p. (2.8 p.p. for women) as compared to 2008. Bulgarians living in material deprivation comprise 44.1% (45.3% are women). 473,800 persons aged from 18 to 59 years live in households with low intensity of economic activity, comprising 11.2% of the total number. By age group, the risk of poverty is highest for children aged up to 18 years (28.2%) and for the inactive population (28.2%).

30. According to EU-SILC 2012 data, 48.5% of unemployed persons (50.5% of men and 45.9% of women) and 26.2% of pensioners (18.2% of men and 31.5% of women) live in risk

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<sup>1</sup> Average EU-28 poverty level 16.9%, excluding data on Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> EU-SILC 2012 with 2011 as reference year, NSI.

<sup>3</sup> With 2008 as reference year.

<sup>4</sup> Combined indicator, including: people living in risk of poverty; people living in material deprivation, and people living in households with low intensity of economic activity.

of poverty. Compared with 2008, there is a decline in the number of those living in poverty by 8.5 p.p. for unemployed men and 0.2 p.p. for unemployed women, and 11.9 p.p. for men pensioners and 9.2 p.p. for women pensioners. Women, especially unemployed and elderly women, continue to be the most vulnerable groups in Bulgaria. This is also confirmed by the data on the share of poor people by type of household, where the share of poor households comprising a single person – woman is 55.8%, compared with 29% for a household comprising a single person – man<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, compared with 2008, this indicator has decreased by 11.9 p.p. for women and by 10.4 p.p. for men.

31. Poverty reduction and promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups is one of the main priorities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. In this regard, the efforts are focused on application of an integrated approach and preventive measures aimed at creating conditions for sustainable elimination of poverty and adequate inclusion of vulnerable groups in social life.

32. In the context of Europe 2020 Strategy and taking into account the reported lower poverty levels among particular groups of the population, a National Goal was adopted in 2010 for reducing the number of people living in poverty by 260,000 persons by 2020, including four sub-goals thereto: reducing the number of children living in poverty aged 0-18 years by 78,000; reducing the number of persons living in poverty aged 65 years and over by 52,000 persons; reducing the number of unemployed living in poverty aged 18-64 years by 78,000; reducing the number of employed persons living in poverty aged 18-64 years by 52,000.

33. According to the National Goal and in response to the recommendation of the Council of the European Union on 6 February 2013 the Republic of Bulgaria adopted a National Strategy for Reducing Poverty and Promoting Social Inclusion 2020. The Strategy is focused on building and implementation of a uniform, consistent and sustainable policy in the field of social inclusion, aiming to improve the quality of life of vulnerable groups in the Bulgarian society and create conditions for their adequate accomplishment.

34. In pursuance of one of the priorities set out in the Strategy, “Providing opportunities for employment and increasing income from work through active inclusion on the labour market”, measures have been envisaged for creating conditions for better combining of personal, family and professional life. These measures are entirely in line with the fundamental principles of equality between women and men, equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

35. The National Strategy for Reducing Poverty and Promoting Social Inclusion - 2020 will be implemented through development and application of two-year action plans to be adopted by the Council of Ministers, including specific measures and activities, performance indicators, responsible institutions, amount and sources of financing, deadlines, etc.

36. In the National Strategy for Children 2008-2018, a strategic goal “I” is to reducing child poverty and creating conditions for the social inclusion of children. A National Programme for Child Protection is adopted every year, planning specific measures for addressing child poverty.

37. The State takes measures to support parents with low incomes. According to the Family Support for Children Act, the Social Assistance Act, the Integration of Disabled People Act,

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<sup>5</sup> EU-SILC 2012, NSI.



the Child Protection Act and relevant by-laws different types of social assistance benefits are provided.

38. One of the main reasons for the lower employment among women as compared to men is the fact that women are engaged to a higher degree in raising children and therefore serious difficulties exist in combining family and professional life.

39. Providing affordable and high quality social services are among the most successful instruments for supporting children and families, as well as for promoting women employment and the combination of personal and professional life. The trends are towards a persistent growth in the number of social services provided in the community – compared with 2009, their share has increased from 463 to 800 in March 2014 (382 services for children and 418 services for elderly people) with a total capacity of 18,241 places.

40. In addition, the state provides support to families through the system of social services. Support to families whose children are threatened by social exclusion includes: development of economic support or so-called "support of incomes", aimed at reducing poverty among vulnerable families like single parents, disabled parents and children, multi-member families, families with unemployed parents, etc.; update of the amount of social benefits; applying more favourable conditions for access to financial support of children from low-income families and increasing the amount of the social benefit for children going to school on a regular basis; social assistance based on responsible parenthood, combining financial support with services as a package of measures offered by the Social Support directorates; updating the legislation on determination and payment of the child allowance by the parents in the interest of the child.

41. Support to parents in combining professional and family life is carried out through: promoting the role of the father, including provision of incentives in legislation for fathers to use parental leave; continuation of the systemic policies for ensuring gender equality on the labour market in political, social and family life; developing opportunities for flexible employment (part-time employment, half-position jobs, work at home, etc.) and professional mobility of the work force; enhancing the efficiency of control over labour legislation compliance.

42. The policies in support of children and families are funded mainly from the budget. The three-year budget estimate for the period 2015 – 2017 and the 2014 budget provide for funds of BGN 556,397,462 per year for financial support of families with children under the Family Support for Children Act, and BGN 10,400,000 per year for financial support under the Child Protection Act.

43. Providing financial support under the Family Support for Children Act is an important part of the support for children and families as one of the vulnerable groups in society. This financial support reaches to some 80 % of the children in Bulgaria. The funds paid under the Family Support for Children Act in 2013 amount to BGN 503,800,715, and the funds for provision of family benefits for children set out in the State Budget Act of the Republic of Bulgaria amount to BGN 556,397,462 for 2014.

44. In early 2014 the Council of Ministers adopted a National Strategy for Long-term Care and its main goal is to create conditions for independent and worthy life of elderly people and disabled people by improving their access to social services and high-quality services. In implementation of the Strategy an Action Plan is to be developed, including specific



measures, projects and activities, responsible institutions for their implementation, deadlines, sources and amount of financing, including EU Structural Funds.

45. The progress in achieving gender equality is in close relationship with the efforts for elimination of poverty and implementation of the other goals for sustainable development. In this context, it is necessary to incorporate the gender perspective in all aspects and areas of the post-2015 development agenda.

## **Critical area of concern 2. Education and training of women**

46. Gender equality in educational institutions is laid down in the effective legal framework and is legally regulated in Art. 4 of the Public Education Act (PEA), expressly stating that citizens are entitled to education and no restrictions or privileges are allowed by race, nationality, gender, ethnic or social origin, religious denomination and social status.

47. The Framework Programmes for Acquisition of Professional Qualification by Persons Aged 16 provide access to high quality vocational education and education for women. Development of entrepreneurship skills is an important element of all curricula and programmes for vocational education and student education. There are no educational or training programmes focused only on unemployed women.

48. Vocational high schools in Bulgaria provide education in 34 vocational areas from the List of Occupations for vocational education and training. There is no problem with the equality of girls in terms of their participation in vocational training. In all the 134 occupations for which vocational education is provided in Bulgaria, girls are admitted under equal terms with boys. In determining the national admission plan for accepting students in vocational high schools for acquisition of secondary education and qualification by occupation there are no quotas for boys and girls and therefore the girls' access to vocational education is not limited.

49. Upon approval of the national admission plan by the minister of education and science all girls may, depending on their desires and abilities, acquire an occupation in any of the educational areas – “Informatics”, “Technology”, “Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery”, “Veterinary Medicine”, “Health Care”, “Social Services”, “Personal Services”, “Environmental Protection”.

50. In vocational high schools, the number of women teachers with engineering education prevails among teachers.

51. Developed are supporting teaching materials as methodology and content on subjects related to discrimination on any of the basic indicators of discrimination.

52. The work of the Ministry of Education and Science for expanding the scope of education in the area of human rights continues. Training in problems related to democracy and human rights as part of the training in civil education is provided throughout the entire cycle of school education in Bulgaria, taking into account age abilities of students. Civil education is among the priorities in the development of projects under the grants scheme “Let's make the school attractive for youths”. Since the second semester of the academic year 2008-2009, the Optional Subject “Introduction to Humanitarian Law” has been introduced, focusing on discrimination by gender.

53. Projects are being implemented with the participation of the Ministry of Education and Science in the framework of which schools are developing long-term school programmes for health promotion and prevention of risks for student health. Over the last five years special attention has been paid to development and implementation of programmes for improvement of reproductive health and prevention of HIV/AIDS infection and sexually transmitted infections.

54. In pursuance of the education-related tasks of the National Plan for Gender Promotion the Ministry of Education and Science makes annual analysis of the legal framework related to admittance of students to high schools.

55. The equality principle is legally regulated through the provision of Art. 4 of the Higher Education Act, stating expressly that “no privileges or restrictions shall be allowed in higher education in connection with age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, social background, political convictions or religious denomination, except for the cases expressly stated in the Regulations on the Activities of Higher Schools in accordance with the peculiarities of the training process and the future profession”.

56. In Operational Programme “Human Resources Development“ 2007-2013 (OP HRD) all actions directed at enhancing the levels of economic activity, employment, education, qualification and social inclusion are governed by the principles of gender equality and prevention of discrimination. Until now 213,914 women have been included in trainings under the operational programme, making up 55.84% of all participants included in trainings under the programme. 74,357 women are included in trainings for acquiring/enhancing professional qualification; 6,650 women of 11,013 persons in total are participating in literacy courses.

57. The issue of gender equality is also envisaged in the project of the operational programme for the programming period 2014-2020. Implementation of specific measures in the field is planned, as well as adherence to the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination on a horizontal level at all stages of the programme implementation. In the context of the programme, actions will be supported, encouraging the combination of professional, personal and family life, flexible forms of employment and flexible working hours, providing opportunities for distance trainings and work, promoting economic activity and independence of women, supporting practices for promotion of gender equality on the work place, etc.

58. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is also engaged in the issue of gender equality. According to data of the National Centre “European Youth Programmes and Initiatives” (NCEYPI), which is a secondary budget spending unit to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, 1,218 men and 1,737 women took part in projects co-financed by the National Youth Programme, implemented and reported for the period December 2012 – November 2013.

59. Under projects financed by the Programme “Youth in Action” for 2014 participation of 4,129 men and 4,148 women is planned. Data shows that NCEYPI applies a policy of equal access to projects for men and women and seeks to encourage development and implementation of gender-equality related projects.

60. The Ministry of Defence runs a permanent programme “Social Adaptation of Military Members Discharged from Military Service“, providing resources for building and maintaining the adaptation system and the main goal of the system is support of military members discharged from military service in their successful transition to the civil sphere. For

the period 2009 – 2013 the number of military women who have acquired the right, who have participated in courses for improving qualification, re-qualification or acquiring key competences in the programme and who have successfully completed their training is 202.

61. In 2009, as a result of the collaboration between the Ministry of Defence and the Association of Military Women (AMW) training workshops were held on the subject: “Raising awareness of AMW members on the issues of equality” and “Development, implementation and management of projects by NGOs”.

62. In 2011, in relation to furthering the policy of promoting gender equality and aligning the legal framework with the principles of gender equality, the Ministry of Defence made a review of the ordinances of the minister of defence for applying to higher military schools, universities and academies. As a result of that measure, following a review and elimination of restrictive texts for women, the first two girls were admitted to the specialty “Organisation and management of tactical sub-units of the armed air forces”: “Fighter-pilot” major for the needs of fighting aviation. No women have been trained for that major for over 61 years and in 2011 the tradition was restored.

63. The Commission on Equality, Family, Women and Children to the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria (KNSB) carries out clarifying work related to a wide range of activities concerning the issues of gender equality, incl. raising awareness of employers and employees of the measures and policies on equal treatment of disadvantaged women on the labour market; enhancing the knowledge and qualification of teachers and directors of educational institutions on the issues of gender equality, protection against discrimination and violence in the workplace; raising awareness in the education system of the social dimensions of gender, whose aspects are included in the trainings of class teachers of twelfth grade across the country under the educational campaign “My first job”. The purpose of the campaign is to help young people to make a gradual transition from school to the labour market and successfully adapt to the world of labour relations, knowing their employment rights and obligations.

64. The Commission launched trainings together with representatives of governmental institutions and local administration on the issues of gender equality for the purpose of applying equal opportunities policies at central and local administration levels.

65. In the field of employment, the KNSB Commission carries out activities directed at elimination of inequality between women and men on the labour market, especially in terms of equal pay and opportunities for combining work and family life. The efforts in that area are focused on signing sector and industry agreements in support of the policy of combining family and professional life.

66. In accordance with the Recommendation of the Gender Committee of ETUCE, in the part for elimination of stereotypes in and through education, the KNSB Commission works for a more comprehensive utilisation of personal skills and for creative and professional potential seeking to overcome stereotypes in gender equality, so as to avoid underestimation of women’s skills and give them maximum chance for professional realisation and career development.

### **Critical area of concern 3. Women and health**

67. The Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria proclaims the right of women and men to health insurance, guaranteeing them affordable medical care, and the right to use at no charge medical services under terms and according to a procedure established by statute (Art. 52, para.1).

68. The policy of the Government is focused on creating better conditions and providing equal access of all Bulgarian citizens to health services, regardless of their gender, age, ethnic and social origin. Among the strategic documents in the field of health care are the National Health Strategy for the period 2008-2013 (at the end of 2013 the Council of Ministers approved and submitted to the National Assembly a draft National Health Strategy 2014-2020); the National Demographic Strategy (2006-2020); the National Health Strategy for Disadvantaged People from Ethnic Minorities; the National Child Strategy (2008-2008), etc.

69. In 2007-2008, on the project under the PHARE programme 2004 “Health Promotion and Preventive Maternal and Child Health Care”, the Ministry of Health received three mobile gynaecological units, three mobile paediatric units, and two mobile mamographs. The objective of the project is to improve maternal and child health care through implementation of a pilot programme for conducting preventive gynaecological and paediatric medical checks with mobile equipment and deliver training sessions to women, children and youths from the group of disadvantaged people in the ethnic minorities. A pilot programme was developed under the project for conducting preventive gynaecological medical checks for prevention of cervical cancer and a pilot programme for conducting preventive paediatric medical checks.

70. In the last several years, the Ministry of Health Care allocates annually funds for preventive medical checks and tests under the National Health Strategy for Disadvantaged People from Ethnic Minorities, using 23 mobile units received by the Ministry of Health in three consecutive projects under the PHARE Programme. Mobile units include 5 units for general medical checks, 2 fluorographs, 2 mamographs, 3 echographs, 3 mobile laboratories, 4 paediatric units and 4 gynaecological units.

71. In the period 2008 – 2013, a total of 18,652 medical checks were performed with the four gynaecological units. For the period 2011-2013, a total of 3,165 medical checks were performed with two mobile mamographs. The medical checks in the targeted areas were preceded or accompanied by lectures, discussions, conversations on the spot, at which the specifically designed health information materials were distributed and presented by experts of the Regional Health Care Inspectorates (RHCI). The subjects discussed and materials developed were in the fields of contraception, sexually transmitted infections, breast cancer, cervical cancer, reproductive health. The health mediator played a major role in performing the above-mentioned activities.

72. In the period 2009-2013, the Ministry of Health Care, in collaboration with the RHCI and the Association “Women without Osteoporosis”, conducted annually information and screening campaigns targeted at risk groups of the population. In the stated period the following activities were carried out: 410 screening campaigns, covering 15,515 persons who were subject to bone density tests and their personal risk of developing the disease was determined on the basis of the One-minute Test of the International Osteoporosis Foundation; medical information materials of the risk factors for osteoporosis were provided. Identified were persons in risk of osteoporosis and osteopenia, who were directed to general practitioners and specialists for diagnosis and treatment.

73. The Ministry of Health Care and RHCI carry out a number of activities related to prevention of smoking: national information campaigns, seminars, trainings, competitions, production and dissemination of information materials. In 2009, the annual campaign dedicated to the International Non-Smoking Day was conducted under the motto “For pregnancy without smoking”. The main topic of the campaign in 2010 was “Women in the target of tobacco marketing”.

74. Trainings are delivered in gynaecological and maternal hospitals/wards to pregnant women and young mothers (smokers and non-smokers) who are to raise a baby in environment of smokers, a training model of medical specialists is built, aimed at preventing smoking among pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers, and “Schools for Parents” are organised to raise awareness of the harms of smoking, passive smoking, etc. The Ministry of Health produced a short feature-documentary film for preventing smoking among pregnant women, “Smoking Forbidden”, broadcast on BNT and BNT-SAT and distributed through RHCI in the specialised clinics and wards.

75. In 2012, the National Centre for Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA) conducted a survey on the health risk for pre-school children exposed to passive smoking. The survey is nation-wide and was conducted in the 28 regions of the country. The object of survey was 3,000 children from randomly selected kindergartens. The outcomes of the survey show that 84.6 % of the future smoking mothers gave up smoking during pregnancy. The other 15.4 % of the women smoked throughout their pregnancy. In 11.9 % of the surveyed families both parents smoked during pregnancy, in 45.4 % of the cases only the father smoked, and in 2.9 % of the cases only the mother smoked. Non-smokers during pregnancy accounted for 51.7 % of the families.

76. In pursuance of the Ordinance on the requirements to the content and properties of salt for food purposes, the Ministry of Health Care makes every four years assessment of the impact of iodised salt on iodine deficiency diseases and disorders among risk groups of the population (children and pregnant women). The outcomes of the survey are summarised in a report of the NCPHA “Control of the impact of iodised salt on iodine deficiency diseases and disorders through a survey of risk groups of the population (children and pregnant women)”<sup>6</sup>. The need of conducting information campaigns among the population is identified, together with regular tests (at least once a year) for measuring the content of potassium iodide in salt on sale in stores.

77. A network of 29 medical establishments and 28 non-governmental organisations work with the groups in highest risk. Services for screening the risk of tuberculosis are provided and suspected persons receive a medical check under a microscope, an X-ray check or a tuberculosis skin test.

78. Specialised units of the Ministry of Defence provide psychological support to military women as part of the programme “Social Adaptation of Military Members Discharged from Military Service“, who have sought assistance for addressing the stress related to a transition from military to civil profession.

79. In 2009, the Ministry of Defence hosted the International (annual) Conference on Psychological Health chaired by Professor Jacques Mills from the Behavioural Studies

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<sup>6</sup> [http://ncphp.government.bg/files/Duleva\\_IDD\\_NCPHA.pdf](http://ncphp.government.bg/files/Duleva_IDD_NCPHA.pdf)



Department of the Royal Academy of Belgium, on the subject: “Psychological Health of the Military Staff and Management of Gender Differences”.

80. In 2010, as a result of the interaction of the Ministry of Defence, the Military Medical Academy and the Association of Military Women, a pilot project was implemented for raising the awareness of the women in the Bulgarian Armed Forces and their families regarding breast cancer, cervical cancer, sterility and osteoporosis. The project was implemented in collaboration with the Bulgarian Cancer Association, the Foundation “I Want a Baby”, the Association of Patients with Oncological Diseases. The project is for indefinite term and implementation of activities is ongoing.

81. The National Programme for Development of Physical Education and Sports 2013 – 2016, Priority 1 includes Measure 4 – “Gender Equality in All Aspects of Sport Policies“. When presenting the programmes and relevant projects, the focus is put on the equal opportunities for participation of women and men in sport activities, mainly practised by the opposite gender – football, boxing, wrestling, aerobics, baseball, figure skating, sport dances, etc.

#### **Critical area of concern 4. Violence against women**

82. Combating violence against women in all its forms is a major priority of the Government, brought to the focus in the National Strategy for Promotion of Gender Equality in the period 2009-2015. In the annual national action plans in pursuance of the Strategy, for two consecutive years, combating violence against women has been among the key priorities supported by specific measures related to raising awareness and affecting social behaviour, providing assistance and support to victims of violence, work with perpetrators, support of non-governmental organisations and rights protection bodies for efficient cooperation aimed at elimination of violence against women and domestic violence.

83. In March 2005 the Republic of Bulgaria adopted a Protection against Domestic Violence Act (PDVA). The act regulates the rights of persons who are victims of domestic violence the measures for protection and the procedure for their imposition. The responsibility under that act does not exclude the civil, penal administrative and criminal liability of the perpetrator. In case of domestic violence the victim may refer to the court for protection and in cases where data exists showing a threat to the life or health of the victim, the latter may file an application with the police authorities for the imposition of measures pursuant to the Ministry of Interior Act.

84. The measures for protection against domestic violence are: 1. placing the respondent under an obligation to refrain from applying domestic violence; 2. removing the respondent from the common dwelling-house for a period specified by the court; 3. prohibiting the respondent from getting in the vicinity of the home, the place of work, and the places where the victim has his or her social contacts or recreation, on such terms and conditions and for such a period as is specified by the court; 4. temporarily relocating the residence of the child with the parent who is the victim or with the parent who has not carried out the violent act at stake, on such terms and conditions and for such a period as is specified by the court, provided that this is not inconsistent with the best interests of the child; 5. placing the respondent under an obligation to attend specialised programmes; 6. advising the victims to attend recovery programmes.

85. The measures are imposed for a period of three to 18 months. In any case the court imposes a fine on the respondent, ranging from BGN 200 to BGN 1,000.

86. After 2009 amendments were made to Bulgarian legislation, in particular to the Protection against Domestic Violence Act in the following main areas: the scope of the persons against which the victim may seek protection by law was extended – against a person with whom the victim is related by collateral line up to the fourth degree inclusive, against a person with whom the victim is or has been related by marriage up to the third degree inclusive; against an ascendant or descendent of the person with whom the victim co-habits, and against a person with whom the parent co-habits or has co-habited.

87. The aim of the amendments of the PDVA of 2009 was to guarantee a higher degree of protection of victims, improve prevention and provide funding for the enforcement of the act. Proving cases of domestic violence was facilitated and the perpetrator may be sentenced even in the absence of eye witnesses.

88. The scope of persons entitled to file an application for issue of protection order against domestic violence was extended. This may be also done by persons who have completed 14 years of age or persons under limited judicial disability; the custodians or guardians of the victim and the director of the Social Assistance directorate where the victim is a minor, is under judicial disability or is disabled.

89. The scope of the concept “domestic violence” was extended to include not only physical, sexual and psychological violence, but also emotional and economic violence. Violence committed in the presence of a child is considered as psychological and emotional violence against him/her.

90. In cases where data shows a threat to the life or health of the victim, the latter may file application with the police authorities for the imposition of measures pursuant to the Ministry of Interior Act.

91. Besides the bodies of the executive, legal entities registered under Art. 18, paras. 2 and 3 of the Social Assistance Act and under Art. 45 of the Non-Profit Legal Entities Act work for the protection of persons suffering from domestic violence. They organise implementation and deliver specialised programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and programmes for recovery of victims of domestic violence.

92. Annually by 31 March, the Council of Ministers adopts a National Programme for Prevention and Protection against Domestic Violence and the funds for financing the activities on the programme are determined every year with the law on the national budget and budgets of relevant ministries set out in the national programme. The annual budget of the Ministry of Justice allocates funds for non-profit legal entities which develop and implement programmes for providing assistance to victims of domestic violence, for training of persons delivering protection against domestic violence, for correction of perpetrators, etc.

93. The almost two-year enforcement of the PDVA Implementing Regulation highlighted several serious setbacks, which were addressed through a clearer and more extensive legal framework of the subject matter. In June 2012, amendments were made, which improved the activities for the application of the act. The amendments provided guarantees for compliance with the principles of promptness, efficiency, operability and transparency of the procedure for funding non-profit legal entities for development and implementation of programmes and training under Art. 6, para. 7 of the PDVA.



94. With the above-mentioned amendments the minister of justice was authorised, in reconciliation with the minister of interior and minister of labour and social policy, to set annual priority activities for financing, consistent with the priorities of the policies for the respective year in the field of combating domestic violence, protection of and providing support to victims.

95. In March 2013 the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria adopted final amendments and supplements to the Legal Assistance Act. One of the main changes is extension of the range of persons to whom free of charge legal assistance may be provided. The right to counsel is a constitutional right and therefore the Republic of Bulgaria guarantees compliance with the principle of free legal assistance to the categories of persons from the risk groups listed in the act – children, victims of sexual violence and traffic, and persons to whom legal assistance is provided under other national laws – the Child Protection Act, the Asylum and Refugees Act, the Non-Residents in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Act.

96. Legal assistance is free for the above-mentioned categories of persons in accordance with the social and economic status of the persons, the common national and European principles and developments in access to legal assistance. By expressly defining the categories of persons who are entitled to free legal assistance, the Bulgarian national legislation is aligned with European norms and in particular Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 of the Council of 18.12.2008 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and cooperation in matters relating to maintenance obligations.

97. The Legal Assistance Act ensures that free legal assistance is provided to victims of domestic or sexual violence, trafficking in human beings who do not have the means and wish to use a counsel.

98. In 2009, the Criminal Code was amended, criminalising the breach of an order for protection against domestic violence as a general crime, punishable with an imprisonment of up to three years and a fine of up to BGN 5,000.

99. The number of sentenced persons for this crime is relatively small compared to the scale of the crime. For the first nine months of 2012, several sentences were pronounced for breach of orders for protection against domestic violence, which require from perpetrators to refrain from domestic violence and not approach the victims, their homes, and social networks. Court judgements impose different penalties – the fines amount to BGN 1,000 and in some cases of repetition conditional imprisonment from 6 to 42 months was ruled.

100. In 2009, preparation of another group of amendments to the Criminal Code started – a working group of the Ministry of Justice drew up a draft Act Amending and Supplementing the Criminal Code and the majority of proposals of the Ministry of Justice related to the preparation of the Republic of Bulgaria for ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (signed on 25 October 2007 by Bulgaria) and the need for aligning the provisions of the Bulgarian legislation with those of the Council of Europe Convention concerning substantive criminal law and the provisions for participation of children victims in the criminal proceedings.

101. In this regard the Ministry of Justice made analysis of the compliance of relevant Bulgarian legislation with the above-mentioned Council of Europe Convention, including the Criminal Code (CC) and the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), showing that although internal

legislation was basically in compliance with the standards of the new international instrument, legislative changes in Bulgarian legislation were necessary. The legislative changes reflect the fact that the new Convention is a comprehensive legal act which covers all the relevant aspects of child protection against sexual abuse.

102. New hypotheses of crime were introduced to the Bulgarian Criminal Code, e.g. “Corruption of children” under Art. 22 of the Convention, criminalisation of the deliberate recourse to child prostitution (Art. 19 paragraph 1, letter c) of the Convention); offences concerning the participation of children in pornographic performances, (Art. 21 of the Convention) etc.

103. Therefore with the amendments to the Criminal Code adopted by the National Assembly on 2 April 2009, Chapter II “Offences against personality”, Section VIII “Corruption” the new standards set out in the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse were introduced to the Bulgarian legislation.

104. Moreover, in accordance with the relevant articles of the Council of Europe Convention and in particular the provisions of Chapter VI “Substantive Criminal Law” new paragraphs were created and the following articles in Section VIII “Corruption” of the Criminal Code were supplemented – Art. 149, para. 2; Art. 150, para. 1 and para. 2 (new); Art. 151, para. 2 (new) and para. 3; Art. 155a), para. 1; Art. 159, para. 2. The amendments in Art. 155a), para. 1 and Art. 159, para. 2, aimed to address the increasing number of cases of abuse via internet, and various communications or information technologies and tools for creation of pornographic materials using minors and committing sexual offences against children and distribution of child pornography via internet or in other similar ways.

105. As a whole, legislative amendments and harmonisation of Bulgarian criminal legislation with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse aimed to address new forms of criminal offences against sexual inviolability of minors, including the inevitably essential need of timely responding to information and communication technology abuses and “seeking” the services of children dealing with prostitution.

106. Equally essential for ensuring the normal psychological and physical development of children is the criminalisation of so-called “corruption of children”, which is in place in execution of the offence under the new Art. 155b) of the CC, without the need of participation of the minor in the activities referred to in the quoted article.

107. At present there are proposals for new amendments to the Criminal Code regarding sexual encroachments against children, aimed at introducing in the Bulgarian legislation the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA.

108. In February 2013, a Working Group was set up to the minister of justice with the task to assess compliance of the Bulgarian legislation with the above-mentioned Directive and to table specific proposals for legislative changes in this regard. In pursuance of the task the Working Group drew up a draft Act Amending and Supplementing the Criminal Code (AMSCC). The draft act was approved at second reading by the Legal Committee of the National Assembly and its examination and adoption at second reading in Plenary Session is pending.

109. The AASCC covers all established loopholes in Bulgarian legislation regarding compliance with relevant European standards for combating and criminal prosecution of sexual encroachments against children.

110. The Bulgarian legislation also provides other instruments for effective protection of victims against domestic violence – Art. 67 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) imposes a ban on approaching the victim as a measure of procedure enforcement. On a proposal by a prosecutor, with the consent of the victim or at the request of the victim, the relevant first-instance court may forbid the offender to approach directly the victim. The ban will drop after completion of the proceeding with enforced sentence or when the proceeding is terminated on other grounds. A possibility is provided for the victim to be able to request revocation of the ban at any time.

111. The Criminal Procedure Code states exhaustively the rights of the victim. Expressly regulated is the right of the victim to receive protection of his/her and his/her relatives' safety in the course of the pre-trial proceedings. Art. 123 of the Criminal Procedure Code lays out the procedure for the hypothesis of Art. 75 of the CPC, in particular “to receive protection of his/her safety and that of his relatives” in cases where as a result of testimony a real threat has arisen or may arise to the life, health or property of the witness and his/her relatives. In these cases the prosecutor, the judge-rapporteur or the court, upon request or with consent of the witness, take measures for his/her immediate protection.

112. At present on the territory of the country there are 18 Emergency Centres (EC), operating as delegated by the state activities with 190 places in total, located in 14 regions in the country. For the period 2009 – 2013 the number of opened emergency centres, their capacity, occupancy and maintenance standard are as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Standard</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>7 750.00</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>7 210.00</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>7 210.00</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>7 210.00</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>7 210.00</b>
<b>01.2014</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>8 251.00</b>

113. In pursuance of §2 of the PDVA, by an order of the ministry of interior an intergovernmental working group comprising experts of the ministry of interior, ministry of justice, ministry of labour and social policy, the Agency for Social Assistance, the State Agency for Child Protection., the ministry of health, the ministry of finance and the ministry of education and science develop on an annual basis a Programme on Prevention and Protection against Domestic Violence.

114. The Programme contains the following aspects: provision of social services to victims of domestic violence; improving coordination between stakeholders; training at school about domestic violence, training of teachers, magistrates, social workers and policemen. The programme provides for the preparation of a national coordination mechanism in support of the victims of domestic violence, aiming to make interaction among institutions more efficient. At present a reconciliation procedure is being conducted and after that the mechanism is to be signed by the institutions concerned.

115. In terms of prevention the Programme envisages a national mobile group for psychological support in the work with children who have become victims or are at risk of violence, to assist school teams in places where there are no psychologists. The Programme does not provide for amendments to the procedure for prosecution against domestic violence within the system of criminal jurisdiction.

116. The first programme was drawn up in 2007-2008 and in pursuance of the commitments of the ministry of interior a Guide was drafted, advising victims to receive fast and efficient protection in cases of domestic violence. The working group included also representatives of non-governmental organisations. The Guide was circulated in 15,000 copies and disseminated within the units of the ministry of interior. The last programme for prevention and protection against domestic violence was adopted in 2013.

117. The website of the ministry of interior contains publicly accessible information aimed at victims of domestic violence. The information is updated on a regular basis.

118. Methodological instructions for the actions of the police under PDVA were issued, including the main requirements and rules for action. In every Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior (RD MoI) in the country regional coordinators were designated for the issues of domestic violence and at the Security Policy Department within the National Police Chief Directorate (NPCD) there is a national coordinator with the following responsibilities: collects, processes and analyses the information received from regional coordinators; requires, if necessary, information from regional coordinators on concrete cases of domestic violence; prepares an annual report on typical and specific acts of domestic violence; maintains ties with public authorities, institutions and non-governmental organisations in implementing joint programmes for prevention and protection against domestic violence.

119. Monthly, by the 25<sup>th</sup> day, the regional coordinators on domestic violence issues collect and submit to the national coordinator at NPCD information about the orders for protection issued under PDVA. Based on that information, the following orders for protection have been issued by district courts:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of issued orders</b>
2008	-
2009	1,253
2010	1,408
2011	1,571
2012	1,837
2013	1,846

120. Following the adoption of the PDVA Implementing Regulation (Council of Ministers' Decree No. 113/08.06.2010), in November 2010 an intergovernmental working group developed an Instruction for interaction between the bodies of the MoI and the MLSP during protection against domestic violence.

121. For implementation of some of the activities for prevention and protection against domestic violence, such as training, monitoring, social, psychological and legal counselling etc. under Art. 6, para. 7 of the PDVA, funds for financing relevant projects are allocated annually from the budget of the Ministry of Justice for the respective year upon the adoption

of the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria Act. Such funds were allocated for the first time in 2011 to 16 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the field of domestic violence prevention. In 2012, pursuant to order No. LS-04-1982/14.11.2012 of the minister of justice, 18 NGOs received financing worth BGN 499,010 as part of the financed activities envisaged in the programme for implementation by the end of 2013.

122. On 15 November 2013 the project “Improving the national legal framework in accordance with the Council of Europe standards and strengthening the capacity of competent institutions participating in cases of domestic violence and gender-based violence”, financed under programme BG 12 “Domestic violence and gender-based violence” of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 was launched with the participation of employees from NPCD.

123. Employees from the Chief Directorate participate as experts in the project “Standard instruments for assessing the risk of domestic violence – strengthening the professional capacity of policemen from EU Member States” under the Leonardo da Vinci programme. The project is developed by the Polish Police Chief Directorate and its duration is 24 months. The activities on the project should be completed in July 2014. Seven countries participate in the project – Austria, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Cyprus, Poland, Portugal and Sweden - and one of the working meetings on the project was held in Sofia in February 2014.

124. Given the fact that social services in the country are decentralised and their management is entrusted to the mayors of the municipalities, the municipality is the authority that initiates development of specific types of social services at a local level, based on preliminary studies and analyses of the needs of different types of social services for the community.

125. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy organises annually professional trainings for reinforcing the competence for identification and adequate support of victims of violence, aimed at developing the capacity of the employees of the regional units of the ASA – Social Assistance directorates.

126. Given the current importance of the issue and the need of further building on the knowledge and skills of social workers from Social Assistance directorates and in order to improve their work with victims of violence, included in the annual programmes and the catalogues for training of employees of the administration are professional trainings on that subject. In the period 2011 – 2013, 243 social workers from Social Assistance directorates in the country took part in the trainings.

127. In addition to the efforts of the state, a number of non-governmental organisations (FA “Animus”, Nadja Centre Foundation, SAPI, Bulgarian Centre for Gender Research, “SOS – families in risk” of Varna, etc.) work in the field of social services for victims of domestic violence; trainings are organised including representatives of Social Assistance directorates.

128. The ASA is a specific beneficiary on Project “Strengthening the capacity of ASA to enhance the quality and efficiency of social work”, implemented with the financial support of OP HRD. In 2013, within the project were trained 297 social workers on topics related to methods of work with children who are victims of abuse and with their families.

129. In 2009, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Bulgaria criminalised the case of taking advantage of a person who suffered from human trafficking, regardless of his/her consent (Art.159c). The penalties for human trafficking in persons aged under 15 were increased and



the fine is up to BGN 100,000, while the court may rule on confiscation of part or the total property of the offender as well.

130. In 2010, the National Mechanism for Referral and Support of the Victims of Trafficking (NRM). The NFM is a framework for cooperation through which governmental authorities carry out their responsibilities for care for the victims, coordinating their efforts in a strategic partnership with the civil society. The national mechanism provides guidelines on the application of the measures for protection of and support for the victims of trafficking set out in the Combating Traffic in Human Beings Act, including provision of unconditional support, providing a period for consideration, granting a special protection status during the criminal proceedings, granting anonymity and identity data protection, etc.

131. Presented are all participants in the NFM, their roles and functions, as well as a description of the measures and steps in support of victims of trafficking. Special attention is paid to the cases of child victims of trafficking and citizens originating from countries outside the European Union identified as victims of trafficking on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

132. Building a system of protection, recovery and reintegration of victims of trafficking through establishment of centres for referral and support of victims of trafficking in human beings and asylums for temporary accommodation contributes to strengthening the psychological and physical health of victims after violence or abuse suffered during trafficking and their successful reintegration in society.

133. Until now two asylums for temporary accommodation of aged women victims of trafficking are successfully operating to the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB) in Burgas and Varna. They are financed by the NCCTHB and provide 24-hour operation. The teams of the asylums are comprised mainly of social workers and psychologists, and for specialised consultations – medical, legal and other – relevant arrangements and agreements on work and cooperation exist. In 2013, 29 women victims of trafficking, mainly for the purpose of sexual exploitation, were accommodated and taken care of. Compared with 2012, 24 women victims of trafficking received long-term support at the asylums, and in 2011 their number was 22. Nine women were accommodated in 2011.

134. According to data of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office of Cassation, in 2009 the number of identified victims was 323 (women - 230, men - 36, minors -57). In 2010 their number was 432 (women - 327, men - 35, minors - 70), in 2011 their number was 541 (women - 448, men - 93, minors - 70), and in 2012 identified victims were 684 (women- 506, men - 73, minors - 65).

135. The number of identified victims of trafficking has increased since 2009 and the reasons for this are improved identification, growing trust in public institutions, better cooperation between non-governmental organisation and public structures, and application of clearly defined standard operational procedures in the National Referral Mechanism.

136. From 2009 to 2013 five Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (LCCTHB) were set in the cities Blagoevgrad, Veliko Tarnovo, Montana, Plovdiv, and Ruse. At present there are nine Local Commissions (the other ones are in Burgas, Varna, Pazardjik and Sliven). LCCTHBs are instruments of policy development and active involvement of local administrations in handling that cruel crime.

137. In September 2013, in view of introducing the requirements of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 05.04.2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, included in the CC was a provision (Art. 16a) which states that “an act shall be considered not culpably committed where perpetrated by a person who is a victim of trafficking in human beings where he/she was forced to do it in relation to that capacity”. Moreover, amendments were adopted, extending the scope of the special purpose of the trafficking crime – use “for mendacity, providing ....tissues, cells or body fluids” are defined as purpose of trafficking in Art. 159a of the CC. Similar changes were made in Art. 159c in respect of the use of a person who is a victim of trafficking in human beings for the above-mentioned purposes.

### Critical area of concern 5. Women and armed conflict

138. In the last few years the number of the Republic of Bulgaria’s military personnel of the armed forces participating in peace-support operations has increased. In this regard the number of women participating in missions increased, and their share sustains at some 7%.

Current percentages (2010 data) of total number of military women who have participated in	Total % of military women	% of women officers	% of women senior officers	% of women junior officers	% of women sergeant staff	% of women privates and sailors
Army	3.64	-	0.06	0.27	0.75	2.56
Air Force	6.66	-	-	-	6.66	-
Navy	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	21.01	-	3.4	2.84	14.77	-
Total	5.53	-	0.42	0.55	2.31	2.25

Current percentage (data as of 2011) of the total number of female personnel of the Bulgarian Armed Forces participating in operations:

(2)	Total % of Female military personnel	% of Female OF-6 and higher	% of Female OF-3 to OF-5	% of Female OF-1 to OF-2	% of Female OR-5 to OR-6	% of Female OR-1 to OR-4
Army	2.64	-	16.66	2.3	23.08	2.69
Air Force	0.06	-	-	-	0.46	-
Navy	0.06	-	-	0.46	-	-
Others	2.64	-	2.56	1.71	2.07	-
TOTAL	5.40	-	0.4	0.57	2.47	1.95

Current percentage (data as of 2012) of the total number of female personnel of the Bulgarian Armed Forces participating in operations.



Only active duty military personnel	Total %	% of OF-6 and higher	% of OF-3 to OF-5	% of OF-1 to OF-2	% of OR-5 to OR-9	% of OR-1- to OR-4
Army	5.92	-	7.09	6.25	15.90	2.63
Air Force	15.00	-	14.29		33.33	
Navy		-				
TOTAL	6.01	-	7.35	5.88	16.15	2.63

Out of the above figures, percentages and numbers of male and female personnel deployed in Operations (3 months or longer), be it NATO, UN or EU Operations. Figures should reflect the situation on 31 Dec 13.

All Operations.

	Total %	% of OF-6 and higher	% of OF-3 to OF-5	% of OF-1 to OF-2	% of OR-5 to OR-9	% of OR-1- to OR-4
Army	2.7		0.1	0.3	1.0	1.4
Air Force	0.2			0.1	0.1	
Navy	0.1			0.1		
JFC	0.3				0.2	0.1
MoD	0.2		0.1		0.1	
SSMD <sup>7</sup>	2.2		0.5	0.1	1.5	
TOTAL	5.6		0.7	0.5	2.9	1.4

139. In 2010, the Ministry of Defence and the Association of Military Women developed a Plan for enforcement of Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council.

140. At the meeting of the Steering Committee of the South-eastern Europe Defence Ministerial Process – SEDM (*regional initiative*) the Ministry of Defence presented the policies on gender equality in relation to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UN Resolution 1325 whereby the representatives of 15 countries from South-eastern Europe were acquainted with key UN, EU and NATO documents and good practices of the Bulgarian Ministry of Defence in applying the gender equality policies.

141. An international seminar was organised jointly with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway on the subject “What to do so that Resolution 1325 of UN SC on women, peace and security could produce results?”, discussing the problems of women in the armed forces, their participation in operations under the auspices of UN, EU and NATO and other international organisations, as well as women victims of armed conflict.

<sup>7</sup> **SSMD** – STRUCTURES SUBORDINATED TO THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (Military Police, Military Medical Academy, Military Educational Institutions etc.)

142. In the reporting period joint initiatives and projects of the Ministry of Defence and non-governmental organisations were implemented in regard to the introduction of the Gender mainstreaming principle in policies, training and preparation, planning and application, including in the legal framework at all levels and areas of armed forces, and active dialogue was achieved between the political management of the Ministry of Defence and non-governmental organisations.

### **Critical area of concern 6. Women and the economy**

143. The national policy on promoting women's participation in the country's economy is being implemented in the context of the general policy on equal opportunities for women and men in accordance with the programme of the Government "Statehood, Development and Justice", clearly indicating Bulgaria's commitments on the gender equality policy over the 2013 – 2017 time horizon.

144. The national policy ensures equal access to the labour market and economic activities, and appropriate measures for balancing professional and family realisation.

145. The Bulgarian legislation contains statutory requirements prohibiting direct or indirect discrimination, including on the grounds of gender, which ensure women and men equal opportunities for employment and labour rights. These requirements are set out in Art. 8, para. 3 of the Labour Code and Art. 2 of the Employment Promotion Act. An express text in the Labour Code focuses on gender equality in labour pay (Art. 243, para. 1 of the LC).

146. Worsening of the economic crisis in the country in 2009 had a negative impact on the labour market. As a result of the economic crisis the upward trend in employment, which started in 2002, was reversed. As a result of the unstable economic environment, contracted production and lower demand for goods and services in the country and abroad employment among women decreased and unemployed women - increased. In 2009, the steady 9-year trend of lower unemployment rate in the country, witnessed in the period 2000 – 2008, was reversed.

147. According to data for the period 2009 – 2013, the Employment Agency reported a growth in the total average monthly number of registered unemployed at labour offices. From 280 980 persons in 2009 unemployed persons rose to 371,380 in 2013, growing by 90,400 persons or 32.2% vis-à-vis 2009. An exception of the upward trend was reported in 2011, when unemployed persons declined by 18,344 or by 5.2% vis-à-vis 2010.

148. In the period 2009 – 2013, the trends in the dynamics of the number of unemployed women and men are the same. At the same time, there is a steady trend of conversion in the average monthly number and share of registered unemployed women and men. Nevertheless, differences in the values of the average monthly number and share remain big.

149. The average monthly number of unemployed women rose from 162107 in 2009 to 200,817 in 2013, i.e. an increase by 38,710 (23.9%) vis-avis 2009. In 2011 unemployed women reported a decline by 9781 or 5.1% vis-à-vis 2010.

150. In the period 2009 – 2013, unemployed women preserved their prevailing share in the total number of unemployed persons registered in labour offices, but their share fell by 3.6 percentage points: from 57.7% in 2009 to 54.1% in 2013.

151. The age groups over 55 years and from 50 to 54 years retained the highest shares in the age structure of unemployed women, though the share of the two groups fell by 0.7 percentage points – from 22.3% in 2009 to 21.6% in 2013 for unemployed women aged over 55 years and by 1.9 percentage points – from 15.0% in 2009 to 13.1% in 2013 for unemployed women aged 50 to 54 years. The groups of youths aged up to 19 years and from 20 to 24 years have the lowest shares among unemployed women. While the share of the youngest unemployed women remain almost unchanged - 1.6% in 2009 and 1.5% in 2013, the share of the group of unemployed women aged 20 to 24 years increased from 6.5% in 2009 to 7.2% in 2013. The share of the combined group of young women aged up to 29 years also increased: from 17.8% in 2009 to 19.7% in 2013, i.e. by 1.9 percentage points. The opposite trend evolved for unemployed women aged over 50, as their share decreased considerably – by 2.4 percentage points, from 37.2% in 2009 to 34.8% in 2013.

152. In the professional structure of unemployed women, the women without qualification or profession have the highest share, and their share declined from 60.5% in 2009 to 57.7% in 2013. A significant decline occurred in the educational share (by 4.6 percentage points) of unemployed women with primary education or lower, whose share is less than half - 47.4% in 2013 (from 52.0% in 2009). Women who have no qualification and profession and primary or lower education account for 47.4% in 2013 (against 50.6% in 2009) of the total number of unemployed women.

153. The average monthly number of long-term unemployed women with over 1 year stay on the labour market is 69,288 in 2013 and they have increased significantly as compared with 2009: by 17,796 persons (by 34.6%). Their share also increased, from 31.8% in 2009 to 34.5% in 2013 of the total number of women.

154. Administrative statistical data of the Employment Agency on unemployed persons who started work are indicative of the work realisation of women. In 2009, the total number of unemployed persons is 209,706, including 120,506 women; in 2010, the total number of unemployed persons who started work is 201,104, including 111,127 women; in 2011, 209,723 unemployed persons started work, including 119,330 women; in 2012, the number of unemployed persons who started work is 224 682, including 122,644 women, and in 2013 the total number of unemployed persons who started work is 249,720, including 141,399 women. A positive fact is the average for the period share of unemployed women who started work: 56.2%.

Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
	number	number	number	number	number	%
Persons who started work	209,706	201,104	209,723	224,682	249,720	100
Incl.: Women	120,506	111,127	119,330	122,644	141,399	56.2

155. A key priority of the Employment Agency is to ensure employment and training of disadvantaged groups on the labour market, incl. women, persons without education and qualification, young people, long-term unemployed persons, elderly people, disabled, etc. For some groups it is possible a person to fall in more than one group and in this case the employees at the labour offices set out specific steps for his/her inclusion in training, employment, etc., according to his/her profile and his/her chances of getting a job.

156. In the period 2009-2013, over half of all included persons in the active policy on the labour market (APLM), realised by the Employment Agency and financed from the national

budget and the European Social Fund are women.

	<b>Persons included in the initiatives of APLM</b>			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Including:</b>		
		<b>men</b>	<b>women</b>	
		<b>number</b>	<b>number</b>	<b>in %</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>172,389</b>	<b>79,788</b>	<b>92,601</b>	<b>53.7</b>
incl. in programmes, measures and qualification (under Art. 63, item 1)	67,735	31,015	36,720	54.2
in OP HRD schemes	104,654	48,773	55,881	53.4
<b>2012</b>	<b>179,460</b>	<b>87,431</b>	<b>92,029</b>	<b>51.3</b>
incl. in programmes, measures and qualification (under Art. 63, item 1)	39,493	18,855	20,638	52.3
in OP HRD schemes	139,967	68,526	71,441	51.0
<b>2011</b>	<b>141,740</b>	<b>65,558</b>	<b>76,182</b>	<b>53.7</b>
incl. in programmes, measures and qualification (under Art. 63, item 1)	50,372	22,344	28,028	55.6
in OP HRD schemes	91,368	42,785	48,583	53.2
<b>2010</b>	<b>139,360</b>	<b>62,546</b>	<b>76,814</b>	<b>55.1</b>
incl. in programmes, measures and qualification (under Art. 63, item 1)	60,070	28,390	31,680	52.7
in OP HRD schemes	79,290	33,535	45,755	57.7
<b>2009*</b>	<b>114,230</b>	<b>55,250</b>	<b>58,980</b>	<b>51.6</b>

\*3For 2009 data covers only included persons in programmes, measures and qualification under Art. 63 item 1 of the Employment Promotion Act.

157. The biggest programme financed by the national budget is the National Programme “From Social Assistance to Employment”. The programme includes with priority long-term unemployed persons receiving social benefits, who have little chance of getting a job on the primary labour market. It fulfils one of the main goals of social policy – providing employment and achieving social integration of unemployed persons for whom this is the only opportunity to work and earn their income. Included in the programme in 2009 were 26,510 women, in 2010 – 19,937 women, in 2011 – 14,471 women, in 2012 – 10,192 women and in 2013 – 19,185 unemployed women.

158. The “Development” scheme under OP HRD provides training for acquisition and improvement of professional qualification and ensures subsequent employment with the aim of integration on the labour market of long-term unemployed persons, unemployed youths aged 29 and under, and registered unemployed persons aged over 50. Since the beginning of the project until December 2013 trained under the scheme were 26,698 women (45.4% of the total number of persons included in training) and in subsequent employment – 24,420 women (45.2% of the total number of persons included in employment).

159. Women have a high share in the programmes and the projects creating employment for unemployed persons in provision of social services. The National Programme “Assistants to Disabled People” ensures employment to unemployed persons in active age who take permanent care of their relatives – seriously ill or with permanent disabilities, thus preventing the risk of their getting into poverty. Given the nature of the work, the share of women included in the programme prevails in the period from 2009 to 2013 – from 67.0% to 70.5%.

160. In 2009 and 2010, the Employment Agency implemented the National Programme “In Support of Maternity” promoting employment and professional development of women by providing care for their children and achieving a better balance between personal and professional life. At the same time, the Programme creates employment for unemployed persons and persons who have acquired professional pension for early retirement and pension for social insurance service and age. In 2009, 2,115 mothers/adopting women took part in the programme, and the number of unemployed women included in child upbringing was 850. In 2010, 861 persons on average per month continued work until the end of the Programme.

161. The scheme “Back to Work” under OP HRD continues and complements the policy on promoting the balance between professional and family life. Unemployed persons, mainly in pre-retirement age, are trained in key competences for taking care of small kids and after that including them in employment for upbringing children aged 0 to 3 years, whose parents can continue their career development. Since the beginning of the project until December 2013 the project for child carers included 3,552 families. Trained under the scheme were 3,383 unemployed women and included in post-training employment were 3,396 women.

162. In support of the transition from education to employment of youths aged 29 and under, including young women, many initiatives of the active policy of the labour market are implemented. The share of included unemployed women is high compared with the number of included persons in the Programme “Career Start”, which enables young people who have graduated from university and without any service term in the acquired specialty to work in public administrations. In 2009, their share was 65.8%, in 2010 – 67.3%, in 2011 – 69.8%, in 2012 – 59.0%, and in 2013 - 72.0%.

163. The Employment Promotion Act encourages employers to create jobs for youths. In regard to the measures for employment of unemployed youths aged 29 and under, employment of youths with permanent disabilities or disabled soldiers for traineeship of unemployed youths aged 29 and under, the number of employed women in 2009 was 515, in 2010 – 713 women, in 2011 – 738 women, in 2012 – 809 women, in 2013 – 1,714 women.

164. In order to reduce youth unemployment and create conditions for easier adaptation of young people to the working environment in August 2013, with amendments to the Employment Promotion Act, three new measures for subsidised employment of long-term unemployed youths, youths without any service term and low qualified youths for apprenticeship under a coach were introduced. In 2013, included on the three measures were 316 young women aged 29 and under (55.6% of all included youths).

165. To mitigate the adverse impact of the crisis on youths the scheme “Creating Youth Employment by Providing Opportunity for Traineeship” of OP HRD was launched for finding a first job to unemployed youths who have completed high or higher education. The scheme covers induction training to create work skills and ensures traineeship for a term of 6 months with an employer and coaches designated by it. Since the beginning of the project until December 2013, 4,752 women were included in traineeship under the scheme.

166. Single parents (foster parents) and mothers with children aged up to 3 years and with children from 3 to 5 years-of-age are in a disadvantaged position on the labour market as well. The Employment Promotion Act (EPA) encourages employers to hire unemployed persons – single parents (foster parents) and/or mothers (foster mothers) with children aged up to 3 years and with children from 3 to 5 years-of-age, specified by the units of the Employment Agency. Financed with funds from the national budget are the costs of the employer for salaries and social insurance contributions. Included on the two measures in 2009 were 491 women, in 2010 – 185 women, in 2011 – 840 women, in 2012 – 347 women, and in 2013 – 672 women.

167. Unemployed persons aged over 50 years, including unemployed women over 50 years, are included with priority in many programmes, promotion measures and schemes under OP HRD. The National Programme “Help for Retirement” ensures full-time and part-time employment for a period of 3 to 24 months to unemployed persons who need up to 16 months of social insurance service and up to 16 months of age for acquiring the right to pension or up to 16 months of social insurance service upon completed age. In 2009, included in the programme were 131 women in pre-retirement age, in 2011 – 26 women, in 2012 – 36 women, and in 2013 – 25 women.

168. Included on the measure under the EPA encouraging employers to hire unemployed persons aged over 50 years in 2009 were 564 women, in 2010 – 50 women, in 2011 – 501 women, in 2012 – 183 women, and in 2013 – 999 women. Unemployed women with disabilities face many difficulties in finding a job on the labour market, and in a situation of economic crisis they are among the most heavily affected and most vulnerable groups. In the programmes specifically targeted at unemployed disabled persons (the National Programme for Employment and Vocational Training of People with Permanent Disabilities and the Programme "Non-interest Credit for Disabled Persons") and promotion measures under the EPA (for persons with permanent disabilities, for persons with permanent disabilities hired at temporary, seasonal and hourly jobs and for youths with permanent disabilities or disabled soldiers and from social institutions, included in 2009 were 627 unemployed women in total,



in 2010 – 867 women, in 2011 – 1,455 women, in 2012 – 649 women, in 2013 – 1,550 women.

169. Training of both unemployed and employed persons is a key priority of the labour market policy. After 2010, activities on acquiring skills, professional qualification and key competences are conducted mainly in the framework of OP HRD.

170. Under the schemes targeted at unemployed persons, training for acquiring or improving professional qualification is provided for subsequent inclusion in employment. Since the beginning of the projects until the end of December 2013, included in trainings were over 51,000 unemployed women. Of these, highest is the share of women included in trainings under the scheme “Development”, i.e. 26,698 women. Trainings are delivered for jobs requested by concrete employers and are implemented through provision of vouchers to the representatives of the target groups.

171. Under the schemes targeted at employed persons, included in trainings for professional qualification and/or key competences were some 99,000 women. Of these included in the scheme “I Can” were about 38,000 and in the scheme “I Can More” - over 55,000 women. The two schemes enable employed and self-employed persons to actively participate in life-long learning to enhance their knowledge and skills. The schemes ensure a direct and equal access of employed persons to life-long learning and this does not depend on their employers’ initiative.

172. Promoting women’s participation in own business is an important aspect of the gender equality policy. The scheme “Promoting the start-up of projects for development of own business” of OP HRD envisages that unemployed person with a clear idea of starting business be supported in its development by using specialised trainings and services. The scheme is implemented in the framework of three interdependent components and supports unemployed persons who have no initial financial capital for start-up of own business and appropriate professional qualification and skills for its management. Implemented under the scheme is the project “Support for Enterprising Bulgarians - Component I”, under which training in entrepreneurial, managerial and business skills is delivered to unemployed persons approved by labour offices across the country, as well as consultations for start-up of own business. Since the beginning of the project by the end of December 2013, included in trainings were 5,104 women, and 3,113 women were included in consulting on Component I. In 2013, 77 women with start-up companies were consulted under the scheme’s Component II and have concluded grant contracts.

173. In addition to addressing different forms of discrimination, labour legislation provides special protection to working women. In the reporting period, Bulgaria extended the scope of women with special protection and mothers with children aged up to 3 years, adding working women in advanced stage of in-vitro treatment (Art. 307 – Art. 310 of LC). An expression of the gender equality is the stipulated statutory provision the rights of the mother to be used by the father (Art. 313 of LC).

174. The General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency (GLI EA) oversees compliance with the provisions for protection of working women and employment promotion, contributing to achieving some of the strategic objectives of PDPD, namely Strategic Objective E.1. “Promote women’s economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources”. Strategic Objective E.5. “Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination”.



Strategic Objective E.6. "Promote harmonisation of work and family responsibilities for women and men".

175. In the reporting period since 2009, in the course of implementing its planned and unplanned supervision activity, GLI EA found 217 violations of the provisions for protection of working women. On the other hand, no violations of the ban on direct or indirect discrimination of women were found in terms of promoting employment and provision of work force.

176. Art. 8, para. 3 of the Labour Code prohibits direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of nationality, origin, gender, sexual orientation, race, colour of the skin, age, political and religious convictions, membership in unions and other public organisations and movements, family and property status, existing psychological or physical injuries, and differences in the contract term and duration of working hours.

177. The provision of Art. 243 of the Labour Code stipulates that women and men shall be entitled to equal pay for equal work or work of equal value and this applies to all payments under the employment relationship.

178. Given the high rate of feminisation in some sectors of the economy, incl. hotels and restaurants, textile and leather production, education, health care, medico-social care, financial brokerage, collective labour agreements (CLA) include clauses on salaries and leave of absence intended to ensure gender equality.

179. In many educational institutions there are trade unions and with the signing of CLA special measures are contracted for working women, e.g. introducing flexible forms of employment during child upbringing; reduced working hours for pregnant women and mothers with kids aged up to 3 years; floating start and end working hours, free transport, etc.; additional paid leave of 2 days for women with two or more children aged 18 or under; additional paid leave of 1 working day every month for single months; a possibility for the two parents to use simultaneously their annual leave; social benefits and payments during leave, child-birth and child-care, payment for sickness, sickness leave, national and religious holidays, annual leaves; parents in parental leave for child-care for children aged 2 or under receive, at the expense of the employer, additional compensation to the legally stipulated amount in the Social Insurance Code (SIC) (Art. 50, para. 1) until reaching the amount of the minimum pay for the branch or the basic salary before interruption of the work process; inclusion in social programmes including assumption of costs by the employer for preventive medical checks, etc.

180. The amendments to the labour Code since 2009 reflect the principles of gender equality not only in terms of their labour rights but also in terms of their family obligations related to child-care.

181. Mothers working under employment relationship/employment contract are entitled to pregnancy leave and child-birth leave of 410 calendar days, including 45 days before birth (Art. 163, para. 1 of LC).

182. Pursuant to Art. 163, para. 3 of LC the father or the foster father, with the consent of the mother or the foster mother, may use parental leave upon completion of 6 six months of the child until expiry of the 410 days. Art. 163, para. 7 of LC regulates the right of the father upon child-birth, ensuring his active participation and presence in the first days after the birth

of the child of 15 days, effective from the day of discharge of the child from the medical institution.

183. The text of Art. 164, para. 1 of LC provides that after using the leave for pregnancy, child-birth or adoption, if the child is not accommodated in a medical institution, the working mother is entitled to additional leave for raising a first, second and third child until completion of 2 years of age and 6 months for every following child. With the consent of the mother (foster mother), the said leave may be granted to the father (foster father) or to one of their parents when they work under employment contract.

184. The LC has an express provision in Art. 165, which sets out that after using the leave under Art. 164, para. 1 of LC a working woman with four or more kids, upon request, is entitled to unpaid leave until the child completes the age of 2 if the child is not accommodated in a child-care institution. With the consent of the mother, this leave may be used by the father or by one of their parents when they work under employment contract.

185. Pursuant to Art. 167a, para. 1 of LC, after using the leaves under Art. 164, para. 1 of LC, upon request, each of the parents (foster parents) may use unpaid leave for a period of 6 months for child-care until the child's completes the age of 8, on condition that they provided work under employment contract and the child is not accommodated in a fully state-subsidized establishment. Each of the parents (foster parents) may use up to 5 months unpaid leave of the leave of the other parent (foster parent) with his/her consent.

186. At the end of 2003, a new text in the Labour Code was adopted, pursuant to which if a working woman adopts a child who has completed the age of 2, in the conditions of full adoption, is entitled to a leave for a period of 365 days from the day of delivery of the child for adoption but not later than his/her coming of the age of 5. This leave, with the consent of the foster mother, may be used by the foster father upon expiry of 6 months from the day of delivery of the child but not later than his/her coming of the age of 5. The employee has the right to a leave under the above conditions and in the above amounts when he has adopted the child himself.

187. In order to facilitate the balance between working and personal life in 2010 the social partners signed at national level a National Agreement on Establishing the Regulation of Home Work and a National Agreement on the Organisation of Distance Work in the Republic of Bulgaria. Based on these agreements relevant changes were made in the labour Code.

188. The Social Insurance Code lays down the rights of socially insured persons (a right to pension, a right to monetary compensation, a right to monetary assistance), i.e. the persons subject to social insurance due to the work exercised thereby. Therefore, in terms of social insurance it is important first and foremost whether the person is insured while his/her gender is irrelevant.

189. Since 1 August 2012, amendments were made to the Protection against Discrimination Act, which were drafted in response to the need to align Bulgarian legislation with the provisions of the *acquis communautaire* of the European Union – Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC.

190. Based on data from the annual report of the World Economic Forum “Global Gender

Gap Index”, in 2009 Bulgaria ranks 38<sup>th</sup>, in 2010 it ranks 50<sup>th</sup>, in 2012 it is 52<sup>nd</sup> out of 135 countries, and in 2013 it is 43<sup>rd</sup> out of 136 countries. Improvement in 2013 is due mainly to the growth in the economic participation index and the increased number of women in parliament after the parliamentary elections held in the same year: from 21% in 2012 to 25% in 2013.

191. In the period 2013 – 2015 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is implementing the project “Equality in decision-making in the economy“ JUST/2012/PROG/AG/GE/4122. The project covers many activities for analysing the participation of women and men in management boards of leading companies in Bulgaria and promoting the national and European policies on improving the gender balance in the management boards of companies.

192. On 15 May 2009 the first conference of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) was held in Sofia under the auspices of the Pan-European Regional Council (PERC) on the subject: “Women in the conditions of economic crisis and informalisation of the economy”. The regional conference of PERC reviewed a wide range of problems: dynamic manifestations of the economic crisis and its impacts on women in the Pan-European region, the quality of women’s life, their career development and future perspectives, as well the impact of these factors on the various roles played by women as mothers, wives and competitors on the labour market; as well as the role of trade unions in the informal economy and for elimination of gender gaps.

### **Critical area of concern 7. Women in power and decision-making**

193. For the last several years a steady trend has been evolving in Bulgaria towards a more significant participation of women in political life. An expression of the active civic and political position of the Bulgarian women is the growth in the number of women members of parliament. Since mid-90s it has more than doubled. The women members of parliament number over 50 out of the total 240 members of parliament in the last three terms of office of the National Assembly. Women members of parliament in the 42<sup>nd</sup> National Assembly elected in the parliamentary elections in 2013 account for 23%. One of the two deputy chairpersons of the National Assembly is a woman.

194. Since the mid-90s until now, women have taken a number of senior governance positions: vice-president (1992-1993 and at present); prime-minister (1994-1995); deputy prime-minister in different terms of office; ministers; chairpersons of state agencies, etc. In the incumbent cabinet two of the vice prime-ministers and 6 ministers are women (38% of the Government members). For a second time the Bulgarian European Commissioner is a woman.

195. The Bulgarian representative to UNESCO ambassador Irina Bokova was elected in 2009 and re-elected in 2013 on the position of Secretary General of the organisation. Women elected as members of the European Parliament in June 2009 number 8 out of a total of 18 Bulgarian representatives.

196. Equal opportunities for women and men are provided in the selection of employees for Diplomatic Office and for career promotion. At the end of 2013, the structure of MFA comprised 48% women and among employees with a diplomatic rank women made up 41%. As of April 2014, thirteen of the ministers plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria, the permanent representative to the Council of Europe, and four Bulgarian consuls general are women. The general director on political issues at MFA is a woman, as well as the directors

of the Diplomatic Institute, the State Institute for Culture and five directorates in the ministry's administration.

197. Women participate actively in local administration – they comprise 26 % of municipal counsellors, 6.7% of the mayors are women, incl. the mayor of the capital and three mayors of big regional centres.

198. In 2013 two-thirds of the magistrates in national courts at all levels and 43 % of prosecutors are women. At present two of the deputies of the Prosecutor General and three of the judges in the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Bulgaria are women.

199. Bulgarian women judges have been and are members of many international judicial institutions. For a third term of office Bulgarian representatives in the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg are women. The Bulgarian judge in the International Criminal Court is a woman and chairs a Pre-trial Chamber.

200. Women are very active in the non-governmental sector. They have predominant shares among the employees and managers of the non-governmental organisations.

201. Bulgaria shares the view of the European Commission that the number of women in the management boards of the companies listed on the stock exchanges in Europe is still small. The many obstacles women face in their career are among the factors hampering the optimal use of the full potential of the qualified work force.

202. Taking into account that the provision of equal and fair chances and opportunities for women and men in management decision-making processes requires an integrated approach, including the efforts of all levels and stakeholders, Bulgaria supported the initiative of Ms. Viviane Reding for dissemination of a declaration-commitment for active cooperation in appointment of qualified women in the management boards of companies listed on the European stock exchanges. The declaration was disseminated among public private companies belonging to the system of the Ministry of Economy and Energy, calling for improving gender equality in their management boards. The initiative was supported at a meeting of the National Council for Gender Equality. As a result of the conducted campaign for promoting the initiative 13 Bulgarian companies joined it and signed the Declaration.

203. As a result of the survey conducted by the EC in the period 2010-2012 Bulgaria ranks third after France and Slovenia, marking an increase by over 4% in the participation of women in the management boards of the big companies in that period. According to data of January 2012 (published in a Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – *Gender balance in the management of companies: in support of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*), the share of women in the management boards of the large companies admitted to stock exchange trading, as of January 2012 in Bulgaria is 16 %, compared with 14% average European level for the 27 Member States. In terms of management boards of the largest companies admitted to stock exchange trading – executive and non-executive members – Bulgarian female executive directors in such companies comprise 6%, versus 9 % on average for EU, and non-executive female directors in Bulgaria account for 15 %, corresponding to the average level for EU.

204. Through the programme for promoting women's entrepreneurship in the field of agriculture the share of young farmer women increased by 41.5%.

205. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy submits annually information based on data from the European Commission about the participation of women in decision-making processes in the public administration, which are published on the website of the EC [europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/public-administration/national-administrations/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/public-administration/national-administrations/index_en.htm). Up-to-date information on the gender equality policy is contained in the specialised section on the website of the MLSP dedicated to the equal rights of women and men.

206. For the Ministry of Defence promoting equal participation of men and women in decision-making processes and empowerment of women is particularly important in relation to the implementation of international projects within NATO and the South-eastern Europe Defence Ministerial Process (SEDM), with Bulgaria as a lead country.

207. The Ministry of Defence maintains and updates database on the participation of women and men in decision-making (manager/commander positions) and participation in missions of UN, EU, NATO, OESC and other international organisations outside the country's territory.

208. The Ministry of Defence continues maintaining a section in Bulgarian and English "ПАБХОПООСТАБЕНОСТ"/"GENDER" on its website. There is a reference to the international project "South-eastern Europe".

209. In 2012, implementation of an international project started, entitled "Female Leaders in Security and Defence", aimed to promote equal participation in decision-making in the field of defence. The project is in the main group of leading NATO projects within the initiative "Smart Defence" and senior political and military representatives of the 17 NATO member states took part in the event, along with 5 partner countries and non-governmental organisations. The Ministry of Defence through the South-eastern Europe Defence Ministerial Process (SEDM) initiative has a leading role in applying the gender equality policies in the regional cooperation in South-eastern Europe. The Ministry of Defence continues implementing events on the project "Female Leaders in Security and Defence".

210. In March 2013, Bulgaria hosted an international seminar entitled: "Human resources in defence – variety and use: challenges and good practices", and representatives of more than 12 members states and 5 partner countries of NATO took part in it. The participants discussed development of a White Paper and Roadmap of the project "Female Leaders in Security and Defence" (White Paper and Roadmap of 1.12 NATO Smart Defence Project "Female Leaders in Security and Defence") together with representatives of NATO Headquarters, NATO Strategic Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk, USA, KFOR, UNDP/SEESAC and Southeastern Europe Defence Ministerial Process (SEDM).

211. The management of the Ministry of Defence approved a White Paper and Roadmap of 1.12 NATO Smart Defence Project "Female Leaders in Security and Defence" in 2014.

212. In 2013, the Ministry of Defence tabled the candidature of Lieutenant Colonel Neviana Miteva for Chairperson of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives – NCGP for the period 2015-2017. At the annual meeting of the Committee the Bulgarian candidature was elected unanimously with an open voting procedure by the representatives of NATO Member States. Until taking over the chairmanship in 2015, in the period 2013-2015 the Bulgarian representative fulfils the function of a Chair-Elect jointly with the incumbent chairperson within the Executive Committee of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives.



213. In the framework of the Commission on Equality, Family, Women and Children to the KNSB and the “Public Female Parliament - 21 Century” (PFP) to KNSB forums were organised in the reporting period, considering problems for: the Bulgarian woman in the social and political life, globalisation and its impact on the current situation of women; intercultural communication as a way of understanding between women and for elimination of ethnic conflicts; the role of the lady leader and her position in the conditions of sectoral restructurings and reforms in the country; providing equal chances and gender equality in all spheres of public life; including women in managerial positions at all levels, etc.

214. On 4 October 2011, a national conference was held in Sofia, entitled “Women in politics”, organised by the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria. Commission on Equality, Family, Women and Children to KNSB and PFP to KNSB in partnership with Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

### **Critical area of concern 8. Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women**

215. The national mechanism for gender equality acts for integration of the gender equality policy in all policies. It functions at various levels of governance and aims to clearly state women’s interests and represents the civil society groups before the Government, the National Assembly, and international institutions.

216. At legislative level, the National Assembly, the issues of gender equality are examined by the Human Rights and Citizens’ Complaints Committee and by the Labour and Social Policy Committee.

217. The national mechanism for gender equality includes national institutions on the issues of gender equality – the Commission for Protection against Discrimination and the Ombudsman.

218. The Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) is an independent specialised governmental body for prevention and protection against discrimination and for ensuring equal opportunities. The Commission exercises control over the application of and compliance with the Protection against Discrimination Act and other acts regulating equal treatment, and submits an annual report on its activity to the National Assembly.

219. CPD is a specialised body for equality within the meaning of the non-discrimination law of the European Union<sup>8</sup>, created and operating in accordance with the Paris Principles<sup>9</sup> and Recommendation No. 2 of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) to the Council of Europe.

220. The Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria provides protection within the legally set authorities when the rights and freedoms of citizens are violated or affected by governmental and municipal authorities and their administrations, as well as by persons who are entrusted with the provision of public services. When the violation refers to the right of equal treatment by gender the victim may approach the Ombudsman.

221. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Policy on People with Disabilities, Equal

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<sup>8</sup> Directive 2000/43/EU, Directive 2002/73/EU, Directive 2004/113/EC, Directive 2006/54/EC.

<sup>9</sup> Resolution 1992/54 of the UN Commission on Human Rights, now Human Rights Council within UN.

Opportunities and Social Assistance Benefits directorate, Equal Opportunities, Non-Discrimination and Social Assistance Benefits department) is part of the national mechanism for gender equality and is charged with development and coordination of the national policy on the issues of equal treatment in all fields.

222. The National Council on Gender Equality (NCGE) is an advisory body to the Council of Ministers which develops and applies the national policy on gender equality and includes senior representatives of the executive, who work in cooperation with governmental bodies and the non-governmental sector. By decisions of the Council of Ministers, National Action Plans for Promotion of Gender Equality are adopted annually (for the period 2005 – 2014).

223. The National Council advises the Council of Ministers and deliberates draft laws and by-laws, gives opinion on them on their compliance with the policy on gender equality. It supports implementation of major projects of social partners and non-governmental organisations in the field of gender equality at national and regional levels.

224. The National Council is chaired by the minister of labour and social policy and its permanent members are deputy ministers from all ministries and representatives of the State Agency for Child Protection, the State Agency for Refugees, the National Social Security Institute, and the National Statistical Institute. Representatives of other organisations, research institutes, national organisations of social partners or non-governmental organisations invited by the National Council are associated members.

225. In 2014 the law regulating the work of the National Council on Gender Equality to the Council of Ministers was amended with the aim to strengthen the role of the Council and the participation of the civil society in it.

226. The National Commission on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings organises and coordinates cooperation among relevant agencies and organisations regarding the enforcement of the Trafficking in Human Beings Act. It determines and administers application of the national policy and strategy on combating trafficking in human beings. The work of the Commission is extremely important in providing interaction and coordination among governmental and municipal bodies and between them and non-governmental organisations in that area.

### **Critical area of concern 9. Human rights of women**

227. The principles of equality and non-discrimination are laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria. The Labour Code explicitly prohibits all kinds of discrimination, privileges, and restrictions on the grounds of gender and introduces the principle of equal pay for the work of women and men. Non-discrimination provisions related to gender are set out in the Employment Promotion Act, the Social Assistance Act, the Higher Education Act, the Armed Forces and Defence Act, etc. The Family Code is governed by the principle of "...equality between men and women...". The Social Insurance Code introduces the principles of compulsory and comprehensive social insurance and equal treatment of insured persons.

228. The Criminal Code qualifies as offences against the personality the raping, corruption to prostitution and trafficking in human beings as well as forcing into sexual activities taking advantage of the official or material dependence of the person.

229. The Protection against Discrimination Act achieves to a great extent compliance between



the EU *acquis communautaire* in the field of equal treatment, equal pay, employment equality, protection of pregnant women and the burden of proof.

230. The combating Trafficking in Human Beings Act introduces measures for prevention and it protects the victims of trafficking in human beings in accordance with the UN Convention against transnational organised crime and the additional Protocol to the Convention to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

231. The Protection against Domestic Violence Act regulates relationships relating to domestic violence and provides measures for protection and support of victims.

232. According to the Ombudsman Act the National Ombudsman and his/her deputy are charged with investigation of breaches of human rights and freedoms by public and municipal bodies and their administrations, including persons providing public services.

233. Amendments to the Protection against Discrimination Act (PDA) were adopted in the reporting, aimed at ensuring gender equality and prevention of discrimination by gender:

234. Pursuant to Art. 7 “Following shall not be deemed discrimination“, item 7 “special protection for pregnant women, women in advanced stage of in-vitro treatment and mothers established by law unless they wish to use that protection and have informed the employer in writing“.

235. In accordance with Art. 27 of the PDA “The provisions of this title (Discrimination in the exercise of labour rights) shall also apply to gender discrimination in professional military service except for activities and positions where gender is a determining factor.”

236. Pursuant to Art. 13, para. 3 of the PDA “When a mother using a leave for pregnancy and child-birth or for child-care, or the person using the leave under Art. 163, para. 8 of the Labour Code goes back to work upon expiry of the leave or due to termination of its use, the said person may take the same position or another equivalent position and take advantage of any improvement of the working conditions which she/he would have been entitled to should she/he had not been on leave“.

237. In 2012 the PDA was further amended in order to transpose Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC.

238. In particular, in Art. 7, para. 1 of the PDA item 19 was created: “Following shall not be deemed as discrimination“: "Different treatment of persons when taking measures aimed at initiatives exclusively or basically promoting entrepreneurship among women in the cases when they are the underrepresented gender or for preventing or compensating for disadvantages in their professional careers."

239. Taking positive measures related to promotion of entrepreneurship among women is established as an admissible exception, within the meaning of Art. 157, paragraph 4<sup>10</sup> of the

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<sup>10</sup> In order to ensure full equal treatment between men and women in professional life, the principle of equal treatment is not an obstacle for each Member State to keep or take measures providing for special advantages in the pursuit of a vocational activity by the underrepresented gender or to prevent or compensate for

Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which provides for specific advantages to make it easier for the underrepresented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers.

240. In Art. 37 of the PDA paras. 2 and 3 were created: “(2) No discrimination shall be allowed on the grounds of the characteristics under Art. 4, para. 1 in the public and in the real sectors, directly or indirectly, related to the pursuit of business, including in respect of establishment, equipment of extension of a business or the launching or extension of any other form of such activity.” “(3) In the activities under para. 2 a person’s rejection of or submission to a behaviour comprising harassment or sexual harassment may not be used as grounds for a decision affecting that person.” [ Art. 4 of Directive 2010/41/EU ]

241. In 2011, a hot line was opened at the Ministry of Defence for signals, complaints and claims by the units directly subordinated to the minister of the defence and the Bulgarian Armed Forces.

242. Commission on Equality, Family, Women and Children to KNSB and the “Public Female Parliament - 21 Century” (PFP) conducted a widespread campaign against discrimination on the workplace, using advanced IT methods for informing the women at KNSB. In 2009, the women responsible for the regional structures received electronically a “Guide for prevention of discrimination on the workplace”.

### **Critical area of concern 10. Women and the media**

243. The Bulgarian legislation obliges providers of media services in the pursuit of their business to be governed by the principles of non-admission of broadcasts which are in conflict with good morals, harm the dignity of specific persons, suggest intolerance among citizens and hatred on the grounds of gender (Art. 10, item 5 of the Radio and Television Act).

244. The supervisory body on the application of the Radio and Television Act (RTA) – the Council for Electronic Media (CEM) – systematically monitors manifestations of various kinds of discrimination and pays special attention on the issues relating to gender equality, and participates in different initiatives in the implementation of the relevant policy.

245. CEM interacts with various authorities and organisations on specific topics regarding gender equality. It collaborates with the Commission on Protection against Discrimination and the Ethic Commission to the National Council for Self-Regulation<sup>11</sup> in regard to signals received at the Council and the Commission, as well as with non-governmental organisations.

246. Since 2009 until the beginning of 2014 SEM inspectors carried out a focus monitoring

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disadvantages in professional careers.

<sup>11</sup> National Council for Self-Regulation (NCS) is a non-profit association for the public benefit. Members of the NCS are representatives of the advertising industry: advertisers, advertising agencies, media, advertising experts, and other individuals and legal entities or branch and other associations which voluntarily accept the objectives and statute of the NCS.

on a number of topics related to current events. Special monitoring on the subject “Gender Equality” was performed in the period 28 March 2013 – 10 April 2013. Based on the focus monitoring on the content of specific programmes, including commercial messages in 13 programmes subject to monitoring, the following conclusions were made: providers of media services apply an approach of gender equality – as participants in different programmes in the ratio of men to women presenters; no commercials with definitely sexist content and discrimination attitude were found in the monitored programmes, presenting the woman in a lower position than man. CEM concludes that there is no stereotyped image of women in the monitored programmes.

247. In the period 2009 – 2013, the Council approached on many occasions the National Council for Self-Regulation in regard to broadcast commercial messages. Enquiries on three commercial clips related to sexual stereotypes were made to the Ethic Commission of the NCS, which issued decisions on them.

248. Relevance to the strategic objective “Promoting a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media” has the comparative analysis made in 2013 of the female portrayal in commercials in EU Member States and Bulgaria – a material containing practices of the European countries and their decisions on use of stereotypes in 2013.

249. In different programmes, including news programmes, the subject “domestic violence against women and children” was discussed but CEM has no special statistics on the number of such programmes.

250. In general, the journalist profession in Bulgaria is strongly feminised. Women occupy key positions in the management of providers of media services with great public influence.

#### **Critical area of concern 11. Women and the environment.**

251. No specific national or local indicators are applied for monitoring gender equality of empowering women in the environmental field. At the same time, the gender equality policy is a horizontal policy applied by all public institutions including in the field of environment.

252. In the last 10-15 years the appointment at senior, high and middle managerial positions within the system of the Ministry of Environment and Water is governed by gender equality and even prevailing occupation of positions by women. The incumbent minister of the environment and water is a woman.

253. As regards emerging priorities in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals globally gender equality and empowerment of women should be among the priority areas of the future Sustainable Development Goals, taking account of interrelations in other areas, incl. water (universal access to water supply and sewage), energy and climate change, food security, health care, education, elimination of poverty, etc.

254. In the period 2008-2013, a National Action Programme for Environment and Health was implemented. The activities aimed at protection and recovery of child health constitute a priority in the implementation of the programme. The implemented activities in the review period include a study of the impact of all-day education on pupils from first grade; a study of the health risk of oncological diseases of the skin in middle and upper school age, and a geographical map of the risk in Bulgaria; developed are methodological guidelines, posters, information materials, aimed at preventing child traumas.

## **Critical area of concern 12. The girl-child.**

255. In 1991, the Republic of Bulgaria ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in November 2001 it ratified the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Bulgaria undertook dedicated policy on aligning its internal legislation with these fundamental international documents.

256. The Child Protection Act, adopted in 2000, is governed by one of the basic principles in the UN Convention that the rights of the child constitute a major part of the human rights in general, that the child is a legal subject not a passive object of the care of the state and the public, and the protection of children against discrimination requires that the fundamental rights of the child are guaranteed in all spheres of social life for all groups of children in accordance with their age, social status, physical, health and psychological condition, by providing suitable economic, social and cultural environment, education, freedom of views and security to all children. According to the definition in the Child Protection Act, a child is any child who has not completed the age of 18 years.

257. The Child Protection Act created conditions for conducting a reform in the area of child care in Bulgaria by building a new institutional framework including a central body – the State Agency for Child Protection, and local bodies for implementation of the child protection policy in municipalities – Social Assistance directorates, which have child protection units.

258. In 2008, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria adopted the main political document, setting out the priority areas and actions for improvement the wellbeing of children in Bulgaria over the next ten years – the National Strategy for the Child 2008-2018. The Strategy defines the right of identity and protection against discrimination as the main activities for ensuring efficient exercise of the rights and improving the quality of life of children as a condition for their free and adequate personal development. In developing the Strategy, special attention was paid to the fact that one of the most vulnerable groups whose rights are infringed quite frequently is the child-girl group.

259. Prevention of violence and all forms of exploitation or abuse of children, incl. girl-children, and providing protection, support and reintegration of victims is one of the main priorities in the state policy on child protection. The Child Protection Act ensures special protection by the state to every child in risk (Art.5) and lays down the right of protection of every child against involvement in activities which have adverse effects on his/her physical, psychological, moral and educational development; every child has the right to protection against methods of upbringing harming his/her dignity, physical, psychological or other violence and forms of impact which are in conflict with the child's interests; every child is entitled to protection against and use for begging, prostitution, dissemination of pornographic materials and earning illegal material income, and against sexual violence (Art. 11 of the Child Protection Act).

260. No customs and traditions exist in the Republic of Bulgaria in relation to child violence and child mutilation (incl. genital mutilation of girl-children). No difference is made on the grounds of gender in the definition of “child violence”, according to the Implementing Regulation of the Child Protection Act. However, some offences are defined in the Criminal Code (CC) and refer only to child-girl – a rape of a girl under the age of 14 (Art.152, para. 4 of CC) and under the age of 18 (Art. 152, para. 2 of CC); abduction for the purpose of

forceful marriage to a minor (Art. 177, para. 2 of CC).

261. The CC criminalizes the violence by parents against children, incest, offences committed by women in child-birth against their newly born babies, murder by a parent/foster parent.

262. The minimum age for a valid sexual violence is 14 years and is equal for boys and girls. According to the CC, copulation with children under the age of 14 is subject to penalty. Subject to penalty are also the cases when an aged person (over 18-years-of-age) performs a sexual intercourse with a person above the age of 14, who does not understand the nature and importance of the doing. Subject to penalty for lewdness with a child and a child rape, corruption to prostitution, forcing a minor person to prostitute, forcing to lewdness or copulation with a minor, abduction of a female person for the purpose of debauchery, abduction for the purpose of bringing a person outside the country; criminalised is the trafficking in human beings (including against a person under the age of 18 years). An offence is in place when a person of his own accord takes or retains with him the child of another, who has not completed fourteen years of age (Art. 185, para. 1 of CC), and if this takes place by use of force, threat or deceit, or with the intention to use the child for venal or immoral purposes (Art. 185, para. 2 of CC). Criminalized is the conscious use of the services of a minor who prostitutes (Art.154a of CC).

263. In March 2010, at the initiative of the minister of labour and social policy, an Agreement was signed on cooperation and coordination of the work of regional units and child protection bodies in cases of child victims of violence or in risk of violence and in crisis situations.

264. The State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) as a national authority for coordination of child policies and activities developed a “Coordination Mechanism for interaction in the work on cases of children who are victims of violence or in risk of violence or for interaction in crisis intervention”.

265. The main purpose of the Coordination Mechanism is to combine the resources and efforts of engaged partners to ensure an efficient system for interaction in the work on cases of children who are victims of violence or in risk of violence or in cases when a crisis intervention is necessary. The Coordination Mechanism aims to achieve a uniform approach by different Bulgarian institutions when undertaking concerted actions in cases of child violence and child abuse. This mechanism clearly outlines the responsibilities of different institutions for their efficient joint work, including measures against potential repetition of child violence and child abuse.

266. Since its establishment in 2001, the State Agency for Child Protection has been gathering information on the number and profile of children who are victims of violence, which allows tracking the processes in their development, identifying trends and undertaking adequate measures for prevention of violence and child protection. The specially developed map is a main tool for gathering information, which is completed by all departments dealing with child protection activities at a municipal level. The questions in the map include main indicators on cases of child violence on which social workers focus their work in the review period.

267. In 2009, 1,828 signals were submitted about child violence, including 1,203 committed cases on which measures have been taken by the child protection departments. The total number of children who are victims of violence and on which social workers in the country from child protection departments worked is 1,539. Highest is the share of neglect as a type of violence: 599 cases or 39% of the total number of cases of violence during the year.

268. In 2009, child protection departments registered 477 cases of physical violence, comprising 31% of all cases of violence in the period. Some 18.6% (287) of the cases of violence on which child protection departments worked during the year involved psychological violence. The total number of registered cases of sexual violence against children in 2009 was 176 or 11.4% of the total cases of violence.

269. In 2010, child protection departments and social assistance departments received 2,881 signals on child violence. After investigation and assessment of the signals 1,529 children became open cases. About 81-83% of the total number of child violence cases were performed in family environment. The ratio concerning perpetrators sustained, and the highest is the share of parents – about 70%, while in all the other options the share is less than 7%.

Gender	Number of children	Share
- girls	1,113	51.6%
- boys	1,042	48.4%
Total	2,155	100%

#### Distribution of signals by type of violence

Type of violence	Number of children	Share
- physical	691	32.1%
- sexual	253	11.7%
- psychological	409	19%
- neglect	802	37.2%
Total	2,155	100 %

270. In 2011, child protection departments and social assistance departments received 2,773 signals on child violence. After investigation and assessment of the signals 1,464 children became open cases, i.e. about 52.8% of the signals become cases.

#### Distribution of cases by type

Type of violence	Number of children	Share
- physical	713	32.8%
- sexual	354	16.3%
- psychological	382	17.6%
- neglect	726	33.4%
Total	2175	100 %

#### Distribution of cases by gender of the children victims of violence

Gender	Number of children	Share
- girls	1,174	54%
- boys	1,001	46%

271. In 2012, 2,903 signals on child violence were submitted, including 2,127 cases and measures were undertaken by child protection departments.



Total number of cases	2127		
	%	Number of cases	%
Physical	18	413	19.4
Sexual	33	781	3.7
Psychological	16	324	15.3
Neglect	33	609	28.6

272. In 2011, based on data from Social Assistance Regional Directorates (SARDs), 2,505 signals were received on children in risk or victims of violence. The teams worked on 814 cases of child victims. According to the type of violence the highest is the number of cases of neglect of children in the family and second comes the physical violence.

273. In 2012, based on data from SARDs, the total number of signals on which the multidisciplinary team of the members designated in the Coordination Mechanism gathered was 817. Half of these signals involve physical violence, 16.5 % refer to sexual violence, 13.5 % refer to psychological violence and 20 % involve neglect. The total number of real cases of child violence on which the multidisciplinary teams worked total 661, and 46 % of these refer to physical violence, 18 % involve sexual violence, 12 % involve psychological violence and 24 % of the cases refer to neglect of essential child needs.

274. In the work on half of these cases there was a need of participation and alternatively represented parties took part, and in 28.5 % of the cases representatives of educational institutions took part as well, and in 16 % of the cases general practitioners of the children participated. Critical events during the year requiring crisis intervention arose on the territory of one-third of SARDs. The description of the situations assumed as a critical event which require specialised psychological assistance covers a wide range of acts of violence, traumatic situations, incidents.

275. As a result of conducted trainings and gained practical experience by social workers they are capable of professionally differentiating among individual incidents of violence when the child needs protection and have developed their capacity to work with children and their families. This fact explains the slight decrease in the cases of child violence after 2004. At the same time, international practice shows that when a system works well, this results in increased number of cases on which signals are received and work is done, which is indicative of the subsequent increase in child violence cases in the next years, reaching the figure 2,127 child victim cases in 2012, on which social workers from child protection departments in the country worked.

276. Since 2005, Bulgarian institutions have combined their efforts and established a Coordination Mechanism, which facilitates an integrated, fast and efficient monitoring of every case relating to unattended children and trafficking in children in the country and abroad.

277. The Coordination Mechanism received international support, turned into a good practice for interaction in resolving specific cases, and contributes to improved cooperation among institutions globally, aimed to achieve the best interests of children.

278. Data on the number of unattended Bulgarian children and victims of trafficking on which the SACP worked by year:

	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Number of registered cases</b>	31	48	47	66
<b>Number of repatriated children from abroad to Bulgaria</b>	16	11	12	24
<b>Number of proposals for enforcement of administrative measure under Art. 76a of BIDA (since March 2006)</b>	31	32	33	42

279. The chairperson of the SACP gives opinion to the minister of interior on imposing a measure under Art. 76a of Bulgarian Identity Documents Act (BIDA). According to this article, when there is sufficient data on involvement and use of children for earning illegal income, the children are not allowed to leave Bulgaria for a period of 2 years. This measure is used for prevention of subsequent bringing of children out of the country and their involvement in trafficking in human beings.

280. In November 2007, the State Agency for Child Protection, jointly with the representation of UNICEF in Bulgaria, launched a pilot project for a Hot Telephone Line for Children 0800 19 100. The hot line set the beginning of telephone counselling of children nation-wide, providing free access and compliance with the principles of confidentiality and anonymity.

281. In October 2009, a shift to the National Telephone Line for Children was made to the single European number 116 111. The line provides information, counselling and support to children in accordance with Art. 17a, para. 1, item 17 of the Child Protection Act. Since the launch of the telephone line the states provides maintenance funds, its management is entrusted to an external contractor which is selected under the Public Procurement Act.

<b>Statistics for the period 2009-2013, based on received calls on the National Telephone Line for Children 116 111:</b>					
<b>Period/year</b>	<b>Total number of conducted consultations</b>	<b>Conducted consultations in relation to violence</b>	<b>Conducted consultations with</b>		<b>Sent signals sent on children in risk to child protection departments</b>
			<b>girls</b>	<b>boys</b>	
<b><u>14.10.09-31.12.09</u></b>	<b>3,671</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>57 %</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>13,695</b>	<b>1,047</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>17,368</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>8,235</b>	<b>6,620</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>19,541</b>	<b>779</b>	<b>9,980</b>	<b>7,261</b>	<b>279</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>20,358</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>10,509</b>	<b>7,494</b>	<b>408</b>

282. Providers of media services are obliged to respect child rights in accordance with the Child Protection Act and other statutory instruments and in performing their activity they

must not allow participation of children in programmes which have adverse impact on them or threaten to harm their physical, psychological, moral and/or social development, as well as to observe the principles set out in Art. 10 of the Radio and Television Act.

283. In October 2011, the Council for Electronic Media adopted Criteria for assessment of content that is unfavourable or threatens to harm the physical, psychological, moral and/or social development of children. The Criteria for assessment of content are the indicators used to assess compliance of the programmes and their components (audio-visual programmes, radio broadcasts, different forms of commercial messages and other components of programme content) with the requirements of Art.17a of the Radio and Television Act in order to protect the rights and interests of children during the broadcasting of the programmes.

284. The CEM focuses on programmes with a potential adverse impact on the child audience. The Council works in binding competence with the State Agency for Child Protection. It made requests to the Agency for opinions on the participation of children in programmes. On some of these the SACP issued statements of violation of Art. 11a of the Child Protection Act.

285. The care for the child health is one of the priority activities in the health policy of the Government. In this regard, many statutory instruments were developed and applied, and multilevel activities were carried out.

286. The quality of medical care is based on medical standards established in accordance with the Medical Establishments Act and the Rules for Good Medicinal practice adopted and approved under the procedure of the Professional Organisations of Medical Doctors and Doctors of Dental Medicine Act. The right of access to medical care, preventive checks and tests is provided to all children aged 18 and under (and after completion of that age, if they continue their education – up to the age of 26, and if they are legally incapable or permanently disabled – irrespective of their age) and in accordance with the Health Insurance Act their health insurance contributions are paid from the national budget.

287. By Ordinance No. 26 of the Ministry of Health on provision of obstetric care to health uninsured women and for performing tests beyond the scope of mandatory health insurance for children and pregnant women neonatal screening is provided to all newborns covering three serious hereditary diseases (Phenylketonuria, Hypothyroidism and congenital Adrenocortical hyperplasia). Treatment of children with such diseases starts immediately after diagnosing in neonatal age, thereby ensuring their fulfilled life.

288. Ordinance No. 39/2004 of the Ministry of Health on preventive checks and dispensary registration regulates the scope of mandatory checks and tests for children in different age groups. Preventive checks and dispensary registration are provided free of charge by general practitioners and medical practitioners in pediatrics from out-patient medical care.

289. Appendix No. 17 of the National Framework Contract for Medical Activities stipulates the basic package of medical activities which are performed free of charge by the medical practitioners in pediatrics and general practitioners within the "Child Health" Programme under the Health Insurance Act.

290. Treatment of children at in-patient medical establishments within mandatory health insurance is provided free of charge for the patient, following clinical paths and clinical procedures under Ordinance No. 40 defining the basic package of medical activities paid by

the National Health Insurance Fund. Treatment of children under clinical paths is provided since their birth in regard to acute and chronic diseases and medical rehabilitation.

291. To support the family in raising children aged up to 3 years and to ensure their normal physical and psychological development crèches and infant kitchens are established. Crèches are organisationally separated units in which medical and other specialists provide care, upbringing and education to children aged three months to three years-of-age. Infant kitchens are organisationally separated units in which medical and other specialists prepare, store and deliver food for children up to three years-of-age. Ordinance No. 3/2007 of the Ministry of Health on health requirements to day-care and centres and kindergartens regulates the legal requirements for such entities.

292. The provisions of the Health Act and the Ordinance on the Medical Expertise (2010) sets out the medical expertise for children up to age of 16 in the cases when on the territory of the respective region there is no expert medical commission in place. In these cases, the expertise of the type and degree of disablement of children under 16 is performed by Regional Expert Medical Commission/National Expert Medical Commission with the participation of medical practitioners in pediatrics.

293. The provisions of Ordinance No. 2/2013 on healthy nutrition of children aged from 0 to 3 years-of-age in day-care centres and kindergartens apply to organised feeding in crèches, medico-social child care centres, day-care centres and centres for accommodation of family type in which social services in the community are provided to children aged from 0 to 3 and to the preparation of food in infant kitchens.

294. The provisions of Ordinance No. 6/2011 of the Ministry of Health on healthy nutrition of children aged from 3 to 7 years-of-age in day-care centres apply to organised feeding in kindergartens; specialised institutions for provision of social services to children aged from 3 to 7 years (homes for children deprived from parental care, homes for children with disabilities and homes for children with mental retardation); child camps for children aged from 3 to 7 years. The requirements of this Ordinance apply to schools in terms of organised feeding of children in pre-school groups and for all-day pre-school education.

295. Ordinance No. 37/2009 of the Ministry of Health on healthy nutrition of students sets out the requirements for providing healthy nutrition to students in student canteens and buffets on the territory of schools, dormitories and centres for sport, recreation and tourism of students.

296. Ordinance No. 3/2000 of the Ministry of Health on health offices operating inside day-care centres and schools regulates the organization and work of health offices operating inside day-care centres and schools. The main activities performed in health offices are medical care for children and teenagers in emergency cases and activities for prevention and health promotion. A new Ordinance is to be issued regarding the structure and work of health offices and health requirements to them (following adoption of the proposed relevant changes in the Health Act), and the purpose of the change is to enable medical specialists in health offices to extend their scope including activities for monitoring and treatment of children with chronic diseases.

297. Among the strategic measures for child health protection are those for prohibition of smoking in indoor public places and some outdoor public places.

298. The National Programme for Prevention and Control of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections in the Republic of Bulgaria 2008 – 2015 stipulates appropriate medical services to cover the problems related to AIDS and HIV protection of youths of different age groups; services for improving sexual and reproductive health such as undesired pregnancy, prevention of risky sexual behaviour and its consequences, as well as reducing the health and social effects on injecting drug users.

299. The main goal of the national policy on HIV/AIDS is to prevent epidemics of the disease. To measure the progress in achieving the goal, the country monitors the indicator HIV contamination among one of the target groups of the national policy – young people aged 15-24, as a representative group of the total population.

300. Preserving the level of HIV contamination less than 1% in this group is the result of the long-term and efficient measures for HIV and AIDS prevention and health promotion among youths in pursuance of the National Programme for Prevention and Control of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections in the Republic of Bulgaria 2008-2015. The Ministry of Health undertakes measures to ensure equal access of all children and youths to adequate, modern and scientific information on these areas; as well as suitable services for young people and access to reliable condoms, contraception and other means.

301. Pursuant to Ordinance No. 47/2009 of the Ministry of Health on the terms and conditions for testing, announcing and reporting of AIDS infection rate a screening test for HIV infection check is offered to: pregnant women, including cases of pregnancy termination; pregnant women – upon established pregnancy or in 1<sup>st</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> gestation week and 29<sup>th</sup>- 40<sup>th</sup> gestation week of pregnancy; birth-giving women who are not tested for HIV during pregnancy; the persons seeking obstetric and gynaecological medical care; the persons visiting sexual health cabinets.

302. As an integral part of the national HIV/AIDS programme, since the beginning of 2004 the Programme “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS” has been implemented with the financial support of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This is the most sizeable large-scale health programme in Bulgaria. The programme provides a package of specific services for HIV prevention to the following groups in highest risk: injecting drug users, prostituting women and men, the Roma community, persons in prisons, men doing sex with other men, young women and men living with HIV/AIDS.

303. The activities are performed at national and local levels in 21 municipalities in partnership with an established network of 50 non-governmental organisations providing health and social services to persons in most vulnerable groups. Over 120 contractors of activities take part in the implementation of the programmes such as municipalities, universities, regional health inspectorates, medical establishments. 32 low-threshold centres are set up for provision of preventive services to most vulnerable persons. The operation of 19 health offices for anonymous counselling and testing for HIV/AIDS is supported on the territory of 15 municipalities. Besides the existing health offices for anonymous counselling and testing for HIV/AIDS, the operation of 17 mobile units is supported by non-governmental organisations.

304. The services provided under the Programme “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS” are voluntary, free of charge for the clients, anonymous, the approaches are non-discriminatory, correspond to the international standards for quality and human rights protection and address the specific needs of every group. The main way to reach vulnerable



groups is through field work when the services are provided in the places where vulnerable groups live or work. Many girls and women participate actively and effectively in the programme's implementation as coordinators or field assistants to the teams of non-governmental organisations. To facilitate women's access to the services for anonymous and free of charge counselling and testing, mobile medical services are provided in workplaces with predominantly female staff. Additional counselling is provided on diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, counselling on the issues of reproductive health and family planning. The shares of men and women who have received services from health offices for anonymous counselling and testing for HIV/AIDS in the last years are relatively equal (with a difference of 1-2%).

305. In order to reduce the vulnerability to HIV for youths in highest risk the youth clubs in 18 towns carry out activities with the support of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. All organisations disseminate condoms and health-education materials. Over 500 volunteers are members of these organisations, taking active part in organising summer ANTI-AIDS campaigns across the country. The task of the 18 NGOs is to create and maintain municipal clubs of peer trainers to outreach young people in risk through field work and specialised trainings applying the method "peers educate peers" and young people in the regions through campaigns for raising awareness, change of behaviour and safe behavioural choices, incl. use of condom. Part of the regular work of the volunteer trainers of peers in the clubs of the 18 NGOs sub-recipients under Component 7 of Programme "Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS" is to visit specialised institutions for children and teenagers and deliver health education classes, to present information materials and condoms, to advise and refer to testing. Three good practices for provision of youth services were implemented: field work for provision of specific services for prevention of HIV/sexually transmitted infections and promotion of sexual and reproductive health among youths in risk outside school; establishment and maintenance of municipal clubs/centres for trainers of peers among youths in risk; establishment and maintenance of a network of trainers of peers and provision of education by peers to peers outside school. Annual trainings are organised and held for work under the method "peers educate peers".

306. Bulgaria has set as a national priority the control over tuberculosis. The Bulgarian Government is implementing a nation-wide policy on control over tuberculosis through implementation of the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Tuberculosis in the period 2012-2015. Advanced diagnosis of tuberculosis is provided every year. The Ministry of Health provides free of charge anti-tuberculosis medicines for tuberculosis treatment and prevention of latent tuberculosis infection to all persons, irrespective of their health and social status. Specific tuberculosis preventive activities are conducted among the groups in risk, incl. prisoners, the Roma community, persons with drug addiction, persons with alcohol addiction, refugees and persons seeking asylum, migrants, children on the street and youths in risk, people living with HIV/AIDS. The results achieved are: 1) reduction of tuberculosis sick rate measured through the number of newly established cases per year, from 37.1 per 100,000 in 2007 to 26.6 per 100,000 persons in 2012; 2) retention of the level of successful outcome from treatment of patients with active pulmonary tuberculosis at over 85%.

307. The National Programme for Prevention and Control of Tuberculosis in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2012-2015, Operational objective 5 stipulates the main activities regarding control and prevention of tuberculosis among children, i.e. training specialists in paediatric pulmonology and physiatry on the problems of tuberculosis among children; early diagnosis of tuberculosis in child age; provision of material base with adequate measures for infection control regarding in-patient treatment of children with tuberculosis, including multi-



resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB); monitoring the treatment of children with tuberculosis; controlled chemoprevention of children with latent tuberculosis infection; specific immune prevention with the BCG vaccine.

308. The national strategy for combating drugs 2009-2013 stipulates strategic tasks for reducing the amounts of illegal drugs and precursors by increasing the efficiency of police and supervision authorities, reinforcing preventive actions against drug-related offences, and efficient cooperation within a uniform approach. The strategy is mainly focused on young people, given the established growth in drug use among youths and particularly among teenagers.

309. Table 1 below shows data on the established steady downward trend in the mortality rate of children aged under 1 for the total country, in towns and villages in the period from 2009 until now, which is due to applied good practices relating to child health care.

*Table 1.* Reducing the mortality rate among children aged under 1 in the period from 2009 until now:

Years	Total	In towns	In villages
Number			
2009	729	468	261
2010	708	461	247
2011	601	412	189
2012	536	368	168
Per 1,000 live births			
2009	9.0	7.7	12.9
2010	9.4	8.1	13.4
2011	8.5	7.7	10.8
2012	7.8	7.1	9.6

**Section 3 Data and Statistics**

310. For some of the indicated areas like “Women and poverty”, “Education and training of women”, “Women and health” etc. statistical data of the National statistical Institute have been used. In regard to the area “Women and health”, in the autumn of 2014 a second “European health interview” will be held, which will allow tracking of the trends in the health status of women and men.

311. A regards the area “Violence against women” at present the NSI is collecting, processing and disseminating data on committed offences by: outcome of cases; offences with pronounced sentence; convicted persons with enforced sentence. The NSI has data on offences and convicted persons under Art. 152of the CC (rape). No data is collected on the victims of violence and on the relationship with the perpetrator, and on the cruelty and frequency of the violence.

312. In 2008, the NSI took part in the discussion of international comparative indicators for all forms of violence against women. In 2008, the list of indicators was extended to cover all data by gender relating to compensations and social security subsidies, including parental leave, aimed at monitoring gender equality, and social insurance data by gender were introduced in NSI and EUROSTAT.

313. In relation to the preparation for the World development program for gender statistics<sup>12</sup> gender statistics in Bulgaria was revised and since 2008 all data are provided by gender as required by the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

314. The statistical data of the Commission on Protection against Discrimination reflect proceedings initiated before the CPD for protection against discrimination by gender, for multiple discrimination including gender, and for sexual harassment classified by year for the period 2009 – 2013.

315. The number of initiated case files at the CPD in the period 2009-2013 on the gender characteristics is 113 and 46 of these were examined by Second Standing Panel of the CPD, specialised in gender, human genome, exercise of labour rights, and trade union membership.

316. 67 of the 537 case files examined by the five-member extended panel on multiple discrimination include the protected gender characteristic. The Commission on Protection against Discrimination examined 16 proceedings for sexual harassment in the same period.

***Table 1: Statistics on initiated case files at CPD on the gender protected characteristic in the period 2009 - 2013 by year and panel:***

Gender characteristic	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Second Standing Specialised Panel	6	10	10	12	8
Five-member Extended Panel	3	13	26	11	14

***Table 2: Statistics on initiated case files at CPD on sexual harassment in the period 2009 - 2013***

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Sexual harassment	0	4	5	5	2

#### **Section 4 Emerging Priorities**

317. Commitment of the Bulgarian Government to the application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the efforts for improving the protection of the rights of women in different areas and for promoting gender equality found expression in the Action Plan adopted by Decision 438 of 25 July 2013 for implementation of the concluding recommendations to Bulgaria made by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

318. The progress on the implementation of the Plan will be presented in an interim report in 2014 and in a final report in 2016, when Bulgaria is to submit its next periodic report on the application of CEDAW. The Plan provides for information campaigns to publicise the Convention and for development of a draft Gender Equality Act.

<sup>12</sup> World development program for gender statistics.

319. The work of the Intergovernmental Working Group for the drafting of the gender equality act, whose chairperson is the deputy minister of labour and social policy responsible for the gender equality policy, is focused on a draft framework act concentrating on temporary positive measures for improving gender equality in Bulgaria.

320. In the short run, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2009-2015 will be updated. A working group of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy developed a draft National Strategy for Gender Promotion for the period 2009 – 2015. The Strategy highlights specific objectives to be achieved in order to remove barriers to gender equality in the country.

Annex

**KEY INDICATORS (ECHI, OMC )**

						(%)	
Key indicators	Description	Scale	Total	Men	Women		
<i>Health status</i>							
Prevalence of diabetes	ECHI 21A	Proportion of people reporting that: - they suffer from the relevant disease, - the disease has been diagnosed by a doctor, - manifestation of the disease in the past 12 months					
Prevalence of depression	ECHI 23A		4,2	3,4	5,0		
Prevalence of asthma, incl. allergic	ECHI 26A		0,8	0,4	1,2		
Prevalence of chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema	ECHI 27A		2,0	1,6	2,4		
Injuries caused by accident – at home, during leisure activities and/or at school	ECHI 29A		3,3	3,1	3,6		
Injuries caused by road traffic accidents	ECHI 30A	Proportion of people reporting injury caused by accident in the past 12 months	2,7	2,5	3,0		
General musculoskeletal pain (physical pain or physical discomfort)	ECHI 37	Proportion of people who experienced to a certain extent physical pain or discomfort in the past 4 weeks					
			Did not experience	58,7	65,3	52,8	
			Mild	19,7	17,9	21,2	
			Moderate	15,7	12,5	18,6	
		Severe	4,9	3,3	6,2		

			Extremely severe	1,1	1,0	1,1
<i>Way of life</i>						
Body mass index	ECHI 42 HC-P18 (OMC)	Proportion of people 18 years and older with a body mass index within certain limits. The indicator is calculated as the ratio of weight in kilograms and the square of height in meters - kg/m <sup>2</sup> .	Underweight (below 18.5)	3,1	0,9	5,0
			Normal weight (18.5 - 24.99)	46,4	41,2	51
			Overweight (25.00 - 29.99)	39,1	46,3	32,7
			Obesity (30.00+)	11,5	11,6	11,3
Prevalence of high blood pressure (hypertension)	ECHI 43	Proportion of people reporting that: - they suffer from the relevant disease, - the disease has been diagnosed by a doctor, - manifestation of the disease in the past 12 months		22,6	19,7	25,3
Regular smokers	ECHI 44 HC-S11 (OMC)	Proportion of regular smokers		29,2	40,4	18,9
Hazardous alcohol consumption	ECHI 47	Proportion of persons who have used 6 or more drinks on one occasion in the past 12 months, in terms of frequency of use	I don't drink or I rarely drink	65,4	47,8	81,1
			Never (6 and more drinks)	21,5	29,3	14,6
			Not every month	9,6	16,7	3,3
			Every month	2,5	4,4	0,8
			Every week	0,8	1,4	0,2
Consumption of fruit	ECHI 49	Proportion of people consuming fruit, in terms of frequency.	Every day or almost every day	0,2	0,4	-
			Twice or more per day	10,4	7,3	13,2
			Once a day	34,8	32,1	37,2
			Less than once a day but at least 4 times a week	26,1	28,5	23,9

			Less than 4 times a week but at least once a week	16,8	18	15,7
			Less than once a week	11,0	12,9	9,4
			Never	0,9	1,2	0,6
Consumption of vegetables	ECHI 50	Proportion of people consuming vegetables, in terms of frequency.	Twice or more per day	13,8	12,5	14,9
			Once a day	45,3	46,7	44,1
			Less than once a day but at least 4 times a week	23,0	22,6	23,4
			Less than 4 times a week but at least once a week	11,0	11,1	10,9
			Less than once a week	6,7	6,9	6,4
			Never	0,3	0,3	0,3
Physical activity	ECHI 52	Proportion of people performing physical activity (high-loading or moderate) at least 30 min. per day		52,2	60,5	44,7
<i>Health services</i>						
Influenza vaccination in elderly	ECHI 57 HC-S4 (OMC)	Proportion of people 65 years old and older who have had vaccination against flu in the past 12 months		4,8	5,0	4,6
Breast cancer screening	ECHI 58 HC-S5 (OMC)	Proportion of women aged 50 - 69 who had a mammography done (X-ray of the breasts).	In the past 12 months	x	x	10,3
			More than a year ago, but not more than 2 years	x	x	11,6
			More than 2 years ago, but not more than 3 years	x	x	8,2
			Not in the past three years	x	x	8,9
			Never	x	x	61,0
Cervical cancer screening	ECHI 59 HC-P7 (OMC)	Proportion of women aged 20 - 69 who had a pap smear	In the past 12 months	x	x	18



		test.	More than a year ago, but not more than 2 years	x	x	19,7
			More than 2 years ago, but not more than 3 years	x	x	9,1
			Not in the past three years	x	x	9,7
			Never	x	x	43,5
Frequency of referring to GP	ECHI 71a	Proportion of people who have consulted their GP for themselves in the last four weeks.	0 times	73,2	78,3	68,4
			1 time	20,7	16,8	24,3
			2 times	4,6	3,7	5,4
			3 - 5 times	1,4	1,0	1,7
			More than 5 times	0,2	0,2	0,1
Frequency of referring to doctor in dental medicine or orthodontist	ECHI 72a	Proportion of people who have consulted dental medicine or orthodontist for themselves in the last four weeks.	0 times	89,9	90,6	89,3
			1 time	5,0	4,9	5,1
			2 times	2,6	2,2	2,9
			3 - 5 times	2,2	2,2	2,1
			More than 5 times	0,4	0,2	0,5
Frequency to referring to doctor specialist	ECHI 72a	Proportion of people who have consulted doctor specialist for themselves in the last four weeks.	0 times	90,5	92,4	88,7
			1 time	6,9	5,8	7,9
			2 times	1,8	1,4	2,2
			3 - 5 times	0,7	0,5	1,0
			More than 5 times	0,1	0,0	0,2
Medicine use	ECHI 74	Proportion of people who have used medicines prescribed or recommended by a doctor, in the past 2 weeks, for a selected disease				
For asthma				1,6	1,3	1,8
For chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema				2,4	2,2	2,6
For high blood pressure				21,0	18,3	23,4
For diabetes				3,7	3,1	4,3

For depression

1,1

0,8

1,4

## Deaths as per causes for death in 2011 and 2012

Causes of death - ICD revision X	2011								
	number			proportion - %			Per 100 000 of the population		
	total	men	women	total	Men	Women	Total	Men	women
<b>General</b>	<b>108258</b>	<b>56634</b>	<b>51624</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>1473,2</b>	<b>1582,9</b>	<b>1369,2</b>
I. Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	520	331	189	0,5	0,6	0,4	7,1	9,3	5,0
II. Neoplasms	16955	9883	7072	15,7	17,5	13,7	230,7	276,2	187,6
including:									
Malignant neoplasms (C00 - C97)	16844	9820	7024	15,6	17,3	13,6	229,2	274,5	186,3
Malignant neoplasms of the digestive organs (C15 - C26)	5715	3364	2351	5,3	5,9	4,6	77,8	94,0	62,4
Malignant neoplasms of the respiratory system and chest (C30 - C39)	3814	3108	706	3,5	5,5	1,4	51,9	86,9	18,7
III. Diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs and certain disorders involving the immune mechanism	144	78	66	0,1	0,1	0,1	2,0	2,2	1,8
IV. Diseases of the endocrine system, nutritional and metabolic disorders	1641	721	920	1,5	1,3	1,8	22,3	20,2	24,4
V. Mental and behavioral disorders	77	41	36	0,1	0,1	0,1	1,0	1,1	1,0
VI Diseases of the nervous system	995	540	455	0,9	1,0	0,9	13,5	15,1	12,1
VII. Diseases of the eye and adnexa	6	4	2	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,1
VIII. Diseases of the ear and mastoid process	6	3	3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,1
IX. Diseases of the circulatory system	72582	35468	37114	67,0	62,6	71,9	987,7	991,3	984,3
including:									
Hypertonic diseases (I10 - I15)	7089	3216	3873	6,5	5,7	7,5	96,5	89,9	102,7
Ischemic heart disease (I20 - I25)	12702	6979	5723	11,7	12,3	11,1	172,9	195,1	151,8
including:				0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Acute myocardial infarction (I21)	5141	3220	1921	4,7	5,7	3,7	70,0	90,0	50,9
Cerebrovascular diseases (I60 - I69)	20300	9321	10979	18,8	16,5	21,3	276,2	260,5	291,2

X Diseases of the respiratory system	4012	2486	1526	3,7	4,4	3,0	54,6	69,5	40,5
including:									
Influenza and pneumonia (J10 - J18)	1340	811	529	1,2	1,4	1,0	18,2	22,7	14,0
Chronic diseases of the lower respiratory tract (J40 - J47)	1180	818	362	1,1	1,4	0,7	16,1	22,9	9,6
XI. Diseases of the digestive system	3263	2199	1064	3,0	3,9	2,1	44,4	61,5	28,2
XII. Diseases of the skin and the subcutaneous tissue	22	10	12	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,3	0,3
XIII. Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue	58	25	33	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,8	0,7	0,9
XIV. Diseases of the genitourinary system	1165	683	482	1,1	1,2	0,9	15,9	19,1	12,8
XV. Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	2	-	2	0,0	-	0,0	0,0	-	0,1
XVI. Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	290	178	112	0,3	0,3	0,2	3,9	5,0	3,0
XVII. Congenital anomalies (defects of development), deformations and chromosomal aberrations	141	77	64	0,1	0,1	0,1	1,9	2,2	1,7
XVIII. Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings	3559	1755	1804	3,3	3,1	3,5	48,4	49,1	47,8
XX. External causes of morbidity and mortality	2820	2152	668	2,6	3,8	1,3	38,4	60,1	17,7
including:									
Transport accidents (V01 - V99)	637	486	151	0,6	0,9	0,3	8,7	13,6	4,0
Intentional self-harm (X60 - X84)	763	605	158	0,7	1,1	0,3	10,4	16,9	4,2

## Deaths by causes for death in 2011 and 2012

(Continued from previous and end)

Causes of death - ICD revision X	2012								
	number			proportion - %			Per 100 000 of the population		
	total	men	women	total	Men	Women	Total	Men	women
<b>General</b>	<b>109 281</b>	<b>56 702</b>	<b>52 579</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>1495,8</b>	<b>1594,6</b>	<b>1402,1</b>
I. Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	626	399	227	0,6	0,7	0,4	8,6	11,2	6,1
II. Neoplasms	18 299	10 701	7 598	16,7	18,9	14,5	250,5	300,9	202,6
including:									
Malignant neoplasms (C00 - C97)	18 157	10 614	7 543	16,6	18,7	14,3	248,5	298,5	201,1

Malignant neoplasms of the digestive organs (C15 - C26)	6 052	3 580	2 472	5,5	6,3	4,7	82,8	100,7	65,9
Malignant neoplasms of the respiratory system and chest (C30 - C39)	4 047	3 281	766	3,7	5,8	1,5	55,4	92,3	20,4
III. Diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs and certain disorders involving the immune mechanism	135	73	62	0,1	0,1	0,1	1,8	2,1	1,7
IV. Diseases of the endocrine system, nutritional and metabolic disorders	1 723	759	964	1,6	1,3	1,8	23,6	21,3	25,7
V. Mental and behavioral disorders	87	47	40	0,1	0,1	0,1	1,2	1,3	1,1
VI. Diseases of the nervous system	1 124	573	551	1,0	1,0	1,0	15,4	16,1	14,7
VII. Diseases of the eye and adnexa	4	1	3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,1
VIII. Diseases of the ear and mastoid process	3	3	-	0,0	0,0	-	0,0	0,1	-
IX. Diseases of the circulatory system	71 644	34 456	37 188	65,6	60,8	70,7	980,6	969,0	991,7
including:									
Hypertonic diseases (I10 - I15)	8 179	3 670	4 509	7,5	6,5	8,6	112,0	103,2	120,2
Ischemic heart disease (I20 - I25)	13 851	7 405	6 446	12,7	13,1	12,3	189,6	208,2	171,9
including:									
Acute myocardial infarction (I21)	5 073	3 146	1 927	4,6	5,5	3,7	69,4	88,5	51,4
Cerebrovascular diseases (I60 - I69)	21 783	9 964	11 819	19,9	17,6	22,5	298,2	280,2	315,2
X. Diseases of the respiratory system	3 974	2 459	1 515	3,6	4,3	2,9	54,4	69,2	40,4
including:									
Influenza and pneumonia (J10 - J18)	1 495	897	598	1,4	1,6	1,1	20,5	25,2	15,9
Chronic diseases of the lower respiratory tract (J40 - J47)	1 442	967	475	1,3	1,7	0,9	19,7	27,2	12,7
XI. Diseases of the digestive system	3 553	2 349	1 204	3,3	4,1	2,3	48,6	66,1	32,1
XII. Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue	32	17	15	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,4	0,5	0,4
XIII. Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue	48	13	35	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,7	0,4	0,9
XIV. Diseases of the genitourinary system	1 350	769	581	1,2	1,4	1,1	18,5	21,6	15,5
XV. Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	3	-	3	0,0	-	0,0	0,0	-	0,1
XVI. Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	237	145	92	0,2	0,3	0,2	3,2	4,1	2,5

XVII. Congenital anomalies (defects of development), deformations and chromosomal aberrations	143	86	57	0,1	0,2	0,1	2,0	2,4	1,5
XVIII. Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings	3 238	1 524	1 714	3,0	2,7	3,3	44,3	42,9	45,7
XX. External causes of morbidity and mortality including:	3 058	2 328	730	2,8	4,1	1,4	41,9	65,5	19,5
Transport accidents (V01 - V99)	542	421	121	0,5	0,7	0,2	7,4	11,8	3,2
Intentional self-harm (X60 - X84)	872	673	199	0,8	1,2	0,4	11,9	18,9	5,3

### Completed level of education as per ISCED 2011 levels and gender

	(Number)				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	<b>Total</b>				
Primary education (ISCED 2)	67110	63557	61014	56753	53929
Secondary education (ISCED 3)	69649	69302	63043	62500	59741
Vocational training in collegeafter high school (ISCED 4)	2439	2426	3224	1457	1137
University education, educational and qualification degree "Professional Bachelor" (ISCED 6)	5549	6769	6929	7555	<sup>1</sup> 4151
University education, educational and qualification degree "Bachelor" (ISCED 6)	28107	28732	29548	31907	33804
University education, educational and qualification degree "Master" (ISCED 7)	20653	21666	23450	23943	25157
University education, educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (ISCED 8)	601	636	596	638	979
	<b>Men</b>				
Primary education (ISCED 2)	34986	33088	31921	30177	28474
Secondary education (ISCED 3)	34395	34657	31516	31762	30154
Vocational training in collegeafter high school (ISCED 4)	1134	1230	1577	329	611
University education, educational and qualification degree "Professional Bachelor" (ISCED 6)	2101	2639	2596	2823	1694
University education, educational and qualification degree "Bachelor" (ISCED 6)	11099	11755	12152	12764	13476

University education, educational and qualification degree "Master" (ISCED 7)	7707	8069	8785	9043	9460
University education, educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (ISCED 8)	282	309	311	285	473
			<b>Women</b>		
Primary education (ISCED 2)	32124	30469	29093	26576	25455
Secondary education (ISCED 3)	35254	34645	31527	30738	29587
Vocational training in collegeafter high school (ISCED 4)	1305	1196	1647	693	526
University education, educational and qualification degree "Professional Bachelor" (ISCED 6)	3448	4130	4333	4732	2457
University education, educational and qualification degree "Bachelor" (ISCED 6)	17008	16977	17396	19143	20328
University education, educational and qualification degree "Master" (ISCED 7)	12946	13597	14665	14900	15697
University education, educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (ISCED 8)	319	327	285	353	506

1. The number of graduates decreased significantly due to the conversion of an independent private college into university and students re-enrolling from educational and qualification degree "Bachelor" into educational and qualification degree "Bachelor".



**Table № 1: Number of pensioners and number of terminated pensions by year and by gender**

No.	Types of indicators	2009					2012				
		Total	Men		Women		Total	Men		Women	
		Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	Number	%	Number	%
1.	Retired people	2 189 131	925 326	42,3	1 263 805	57,7	2 208 446	927 744	42,0	1 280 702	58,0
2.	Retired people with personal pensions	2 063 457	900 036	43,6	1 163 421	56,4	2 083 587	902 500	43,3	1 181 087	56,7
3.	Retired people with survivor's pensions	125 674	25 290	20,1	100 384	79,9	124 859	25 244	20,2	99 615	79,8
4.	Retired people receiving pensions from the Pension Fund	2 118 150	888 349	41,9	1 229 801	58,1	2 140 116	890 812	41,6	1 249 304	58,4
5.	Personal pensions terminated due to death	95 991	48 599	50,6	47 392	49,4	97 046	48 709	50,2	48 337	49,8
6.	Terminated personal disability pensions due to rehabilitation of disabled	5 728	2 369	41,4	3 359	58,6	4 190	1 963	46,8	2 227	53,2

**Table № 2: Average indicator for the pensions by year and by gender**

No.	TYPES OF INDICATORS	2009			2012		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
1.	Average age of retired people with personal pensions (in years)	68,4	67,2	69,4	68,8	67,5	69,8
2.	Average age of pensioners with personal pensions for insurance and old age (in years)	71,2	70,4	71,7	71,8	71,0	72,4
3.	Average age of pensioners with personal pensions for disability due to sickness (in years)	58,6	57,3	59,6	59,9	57,7	59,9
4.	Average ratio of pensioners with personal first insurance and old-age pensions	1,314	1,602	1,094	1,31	1,588	1,104
5.	Average pensionable service in personal first pensions for insurance and old age converted to third category of labor (in years)	36,6	43	31,7	37,1	43,1	32,6
6.	Average monthly basic pension for pensioners with personal first pensions for insurance and old age (Art. 68 and Art. 69 of the Social Insurance Code) (BGN)	253,88	339,45	188,27	265,07	349,27	202,33
7.	Average duration of receiving a pension (in years)	19,8	17,2	22,5	20,8	18	23,7
8.	Average duration of receiving a pension for the period from disability to recovering ability to work (in years)	5,5	5,6	5,5	5,5	5,3	5,8
9.	Average monthly amount of the widow's supplement (in lev)	40,90	28,18	44,17	54,97	38,10	59,20

**Table № 3: Number of widower's supplements by year and by gender**

No.	Types of indicators	2009					2012				
		Total	Received by men		Received by women		Total	Received by men		Received by women	
		Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	Number	%	Number	%
1.	Number of widow's supplements to pensions	663 344	139 922	20,5	543422	79,5	718 346	143 613	20	574 733	80

**Table № 4: Average social security income and number of insured by year and by gender**

No.	Types of indicators	2009			2012		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
1.	Average social security income (lev)	554,78	588,62	519,27	618,06	655,76	579,12
2.	Number of insured people	2 829 819	1 479 995	1 349 824	2 770 030	1 412 715	1 357 315

№	ВИДОВЕ ПОКАЗАТЕЛИ	2009 г.			2012 г.		
		Общо	Мъже	Жени	Общо	Мъже	Жени
1.	Среден осигурителен доход (лева)	554,78	588,62	519,27	618,06	655,76	579,12
2.	Брой осигурени лица	2 829 819	1 479 995	1 349 824	2 770 030	1 412 715	1 357 315

**Table № 5: Proportion of men and women of the total number of people receiving unemployment benefits and average monthly compensation amount**

No.	Types of indicators	2009		2012	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
1.	Registered unemployed persons entitled to monetary compensation (%)	45,88	54,12	46,07	53,93
2.	Registered unemployed persons entitled to monetary compensation for long term unemployment (%)	31,5	68,5	32,4	67,6
3.	Average monthly amount of the monetary compensation for unemployment (Lev)	145,85	142,2	281,58	242,97

**Table № 6: Number of persons receiving cash benefits for temporary disability, including to care for sick family members and number of paid days by gender and year**

No.	Types of indicators	2009					2012				
		Total	Men		Women		Total	Men		Women	
		Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	Number	%	Number	%
1.	Number of persons receiving compensation for temporary disability due to sickness (sickness, caring for sick family member, quarantine, non-occupational accidents, etc.)	2 159 976	858 523	39,7	1 301 453	60,3	1 434 158	561 027	39,1	873 131	60,9
2.	Number of persons receiving benefits for temporary incapacity for caring for sick family member	199 092	12 853	6,5	186 239	93,5	121 910	9 068	7,4	112 842	92,6
3.	Number of paid days for temporary incapacity for caring for sick family member	741 345	45 530	6,1	695 815	93,9	387 182	28 126	7,3	359 056	93

**Table № 7: Average indicators for benefits for temporary incapacity by gender and by year**

No.	Types of indicators	2009			2012		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
1.	Average monthly compensation paid for caring for sick family member (lev)	72,71	96,79	71,05	65,76	83,71	64,32
2.	Average monthly compensation paid for temporary disability due to sickness (sickness, caring for sick family member, quarantine, non-occupational accidents, etc.)	130	149	118	145	162	133

## List of Abbreviations

AASCC	Act Amending and Supplementing the Criminal Code
AMW	Association of Military Women
APLM	Active policy on the labour market
ASA	Agency for Social Assistance
BIDA	Bulgarian Identity Documents Act
CC	Criminal Code
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEM	Council for Electronic Media
CLA	Collective labour agreement
CPC	Criminal Procedure Code
CPD	Commission for Protection against Discrimination
EC	Emergency Centre
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
EPA	Employment Promotion Act
ETUCE	European Trade Union Committee for Education
EU	European Union
EU	European Commission
EU-SILC	Statistics on income and living conditions
GLI EA	General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency
HRC	Human Rights Council
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
KNSB	Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria
LC	Labour Code
LCCTHB	Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
MoI	Ministry of Interior
NCCTHB	National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
NCEYPI	National Centre “European Youth Programmes and Initiatives”
NCGE	National Council on Gender Equality
NCGP	NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives
NCMHR	National Coordination Mechanism on Human Rights
NCPHA	National Centre for Public Health and Analyses
NCS	National Council for Self-Regulation
NPCD	National Police Chief Directorate
NRM	National Mechanism for Referral and Support for the Victims of Trafficking
NSI	National Statistical Institute
OPHRD	Operational Programme “Human Resources Development“ 2007-2013
PDA	Protection against Discrimination Act
PDVA	Protection against Domestic Violence Act
PEA	Public Education Act
PERC	Pan-European Regional Council
PFP	Public Female Parliament
RDMoI	Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior
RHCI	Regional Health Care Inspectorate



RTA	Radio and Television Act
SACP	State Agency for Child Protection
SAPI	Social Activities and Practices Institute
SARD	Social Assistance Regional Directorates
SIC	Social Insurance Code
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review