

THE CHANCELLERY OF THE PRIME MINISTER



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT PLENIPOTENTIARY
FOR EQUAL TREATMENT

**Report on the implementation of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session
of the General Assembly (2000)**

POLAND

The national machinery responsible for this report

THE GOVERNMENT PLENIPOTENTIARY FOR EQUAL TREATMENT

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**Implementation of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the
outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000)**

in the context of the

**twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women
and the adoption of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
2015**

Section One: Overview analysis of achievements and challenges since 1995

Gender equality in Poland and in the whole of Europe has improved for the last few decades. However, the risk of discrimination based on sex in many areas of life can still be observed in economic and social processes. One of the most essential of these areas is the situation on the labour market. Due to gender stereotypes, women receive lower pay than men and face barriers in access to promotion. Although the share of men in family responsibilities is increasing, it is still women who have most responsibilities connected with raising children and running a household – regardless of their professional work. On the other hand, more and more women successfully establish their own enterprises, and 1/3 of businesses are run by women. Poland actively addresses the problem of ensuring gender equality by introducing legislative acts and by implementing policies and actions for ensuring access to employment, including promotion and professional training, work conditions and social security. Accession to the European Union has essentially accelerated legal changes in the field of gender equality. The Labour Code is being systematically amended, in line with the latest EU directives. There are also new solutions, based on proven European examples, e.g. an Act on telework regulating flexible forms of employment, which has been in force since 2007. In the last years, the role of actions directed at improving the situation of families has increased. In 2005 an Act on preventing family violence was introduced, followed by an action programme in this field and its amendment in 2010. A so-called family policy package, which supports the possibilities of combining parenthood with professional career, was adopted in 2008 and has been implemented since 2009, and it has been significantly improving. In 2011 the so called the quota law was adopted.

The basis of equality of women and men in Poland is the principle of equality before the law. Pursuant to the Polish Constitution (Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997, Journal of Laws [Dz. U.] No. 78, Item 483, as amended) all persons are equal before the law. No one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever (Article 32). Under Article 33 of the Constitution men and women have equal rights in family,

political, social and economic life. Woman and men have equal rights, in particular regarding education, employment and promotion, and shall have the right to uniform remuneration for equal work or for work of equal value, to social security, to hold offices, and to receive public honours and decorations. This principle is detailed in the Labour Code (Act of 26 June 1974 Labour Code, Journal of Laws [Dz. U.] of 1998, No. 21, Item 94, as amended). One of the elementary principles of labour law is the prohibition of any discrimination, direct or indirect, in employment, in particular with regard to gender (Article 113 Labour Code). Employees have equal rights by resulting from the performance of identical duties; this applies in particular to the equal treatment of men and women in the area of work (Article 112 Labour Code).

Most provisions prohibiting discrimination are contained in Chapter IIa “Equal treatment in employment” in the First Part “General Provisions” of the Labour Code. Under Article 183a of the Labour Code, employees should be treated equally in establishing and dissolving employment relationships, employment conditions, promotion and access to trainings for raising professional qualifications, in particular regardless of gender. Equal treatment in employment means that no person is discriminated against in any way – directly nor indirectly. The Labour Code also includes a definition of sexual harassment (Article 183a § 6 Labour Code: gender discrimination is also any undesirable sexual behaviour or behaviour relating to employee’s sex, aiming at and resulting in humiliating the employee, and in particular in creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or affronting atmosphere; such behaviour may include physical, verbal or non-verbal elements). The Labour Code guarantees the right to uniform remuneration for equal work or work of equal value regardless of gender. The Labour Code also contains guarantees for persons against which the principle of equal treatment in employment has been violated. A person who faced violation of this principle by employer has the right to compensation in the amount equal to minimum pay, which is specified in separate provisions, or higher (Article 183d Labour Code). Moreover, employees must not face any negative consequences of claiming their rights due to violation of the principle of equal treatment in employment. This provision applies also to employees who granted any kind of support to employees claiming their rights due to violation of the principle of equal treatment in employment (art. 183e Labour Code).

a) What are the country’s three to five major achievements in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

1. the so-called Quota Act

In the reporting period, the share of women in the Polish parliament (the 460-person Sejm and the 100-person Senate) gradually increased and was the following: in 2001-2005 – 20% in the Sejm, 23% in the Senate; in 2005-2007 – 21% in the Sejm, 24% in the Senate, and 2007 – 20% in the Sejm, 8% in the Senate.

In the elections to the European Parliament held in June 2009 women constituted 22.89% of the candidates and men – 77.11%. 11 women won parliamentary seats, which accounts for 22% of the number of mandates allocated to Poland. In the reporting period, the National Electoral

Commission did not collect data on the number of women and men participating in elections or information on the number of women and men belonging to political parties.

In 2009, a citizens' bill on gender quotas on electoral lists was put forward to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland as a consequence of the activity of the Congress of Women social movement. Following work on the bill after the reporting period, the Act of 5 January 2011 on amending the Act – Electoral Regulations to Gmina Councils, Poviast Councils and Regional Councils, Act – Electoral Regulations to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and the Senate of the Republic of Poland and the Act – Electoral Regulations to the European Parliament (Dz. U. No 34, item 172) (the so-called Quota Act) entered into force on 3 March 2011. The Act amended the electoral regulations to the Sejm, the European Parliament and gmina, powiat and regional councils. According to the Act, the percentage of female and male candidates on electoral lists to these authorities may not fall below 35%. Should a list fail to meet the gender quota, it will not be registered. For the first time in Poland it has been possible to introduce legal regulations that guarantee a specific percentage share of women on electoral lists. Before 2009, bills put forward to the Sejm that pertained to introducing the gender quota were not accepted (they were rejected at the first reading). As a result of the quota law 24 % of women joined lower chamber of the Polish parliament (highest score in the history) and 12 % upper chamber – the senat.

Between 1998 and 2010, the share of women in local authorities was systematically on the rise. In 1998, slightly over 15% of women sat on local government councils, whereas following June 2010 elections they already constituted one fourth of all elected councillors.

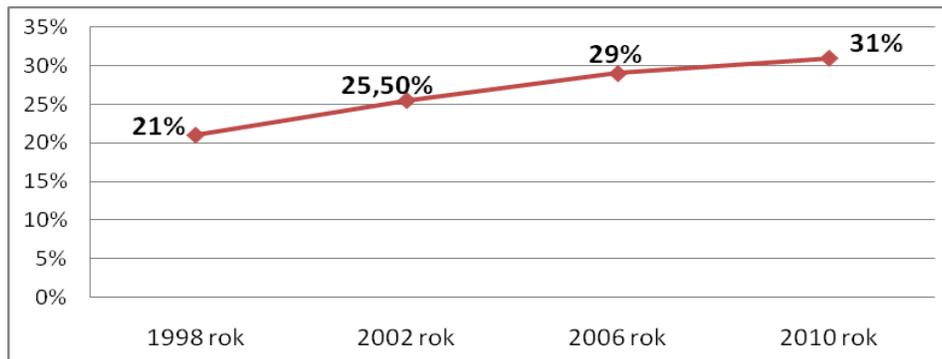
Table: The number of women among councillors of all local government levels elected in 1998-2010 (in %).

1998	16%
2002	18%
2006	21%
2010	25%

Source: Aleksandra Niżyńska, *Female Candidates in the 2010 Local Government Elections*, Institute of Public Affairs, 2011. Table prepared based on National Electoral Commission data.

Between 2002 and 2010, the number of female candidates increased in subsequent elections as did the number of elected female councillors. In 2002, over one-fourth of candidates to all local government levels were women; in 2006 this percentage increased to 29%, while in June 2010 (after the reporting period) it exceeded 30%.

Table: *The number of women among candidates to law-making bodies of all local government levels elected in the given year (in %).*



Source: *ibid.*

In 2002, female councillor candidates to rural gmina councils accounted for 23.4% of the total number of councillor candidates to rural gmina councils; in 2006 – for 27.1%.

In 2002, female councillors constituted 17.3% of all councillors in rural gminas, whereas in 2006 this percentage increased to 20.8%.

In 2002, women elected to the post of *voit* (head of gmina) constituted 7% of the total number of *voits* elected; in 2006 – 8.3%. In 2009, women acting as village administrators (*sołtys*)¹ constituted 30.1% of the total number of village administrators in Poland; in 2010 – 30.7%.

Moreover, women occupy more than 50 % of higher posts in civil service (post of director general, director or deputy of departments) what is one of the highest score in OECD countries, if it comes to access to the administrative posts for women.

2. Act on the implementation of certain provisions of the European Union on equal treatment

Between 2006 and 2009, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy worked on a draft Act on the implementation of certain provisions of the European Union on equal treatment. The draft Act was aimed to complement the existing regulations in the field of equal treatment. In April 2010, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment was authorised to continue work on the Act, which was passed already after the end of the reporting period, on 3 December 2010, and entered into force on 1 January 2011 known as *Act on the implementation of certain provisions of the European Union on equal treatment*. The Act specifies the areas and methods of counteracting equal treatment violations on account of gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality,

¹ The *sołectwo* run by the *sołtys* is an auxiliary unit of the gmina characteristic of rural gminas. The area and scope of action of the *sołectwo* and its bodies is defined by the gmina council in the *sołectwo* statutes. The law-making body of *sołectwo* is the village meeting, and the executive – the *sołtys*. In 2010, there were 40,317 *sołectwos* in Poland.

religion, denomination, world view, disability, age and sexual orientation. It also specifies the competent bodies in matters of equal treatment. The performance of tasks related to implementing the principle of equal treatment was entrusted to the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and to the Human Rights Defender. The Human Rights Defender ensures compliance with the principle of equal treatment as an independent body within the meaning of the provisions of Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, appointed and dismissed by the Prime Minister, implements the Government's equal treatment policy.

The Act obliges the Plenipotentiary to design the National Action Plan for Equal Treatment – a strategic document specifying the objectives and priorities of the Government's equal treatment activities, in particular as regards: raising social awareness of equal treatment, including of the causes and effects of violating the principle of equal treatment; preventing violations of the principle of equal treatment; cooperating with social partners, non-governmental organisations and other entities in the field of equal treatment.

National Action Plan for Equal Treatment for 2013-2016 was adopted in December 2013 by government.

3. Actions for enhancing gender equality on the labour market

The Polish Government has implemented a number of measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market and promoting the concept of work-life balance for the purposes of making it easier to reconcile work and family life through, inter alia, the implementation of projects co-financed by the European Social Fund.

Support was provided within the framework of the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2004-2006 (SOP HRD) for the purposes of providing comprehensive aid to women on the labour market, leading to an increase in the employment rate of women and an enhancement of their social and professional status, by promoting equal access to employment for both men and women, promoting the concept of continuing education, actions aimed at increasing the levels of employability as well as popularizing flexible forms of employment aimed at facilitating work-life balance. It is also worth emphasizing that the support in question was also aimed at employers and labour market institutions which benefitted from a number of training programmes pertaining to flexible forms of employment, with particular emphasis on new technologies, as well as state-of-the-art work organization methods and the rights and duties related to equal opportunities for men and women stemming from the provisions of labour law. A total of nearly 55 thousand women have participated in the support programme, with 49.5% of those participating either finding new jobs or continuing their education. The total budget of the actions referred to above amounted to approximately EUR 74 million.

Within the framework of another Programme, the EQUAL Community Initiative, there was also a dedicated action aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for men and women, its objective being primarily to facilitate the reconciliation of professional and family life and to ensure the reintegration of unemployed adults into the labour market by way of implementation of more

flexible and efficient methods of work organization as well as accompanying measures. The tasks performed within the framework of the EQUAL Initiative have served to develop innovative, model solutions conducive towards work-life balance through the support of the development of child and dependent care, facilitating skill development as well as promoting flexible forms of employment. The solutions in question include, inter alia, the model aimed at the prevention of situations where the knowledge and experience of parents becomes out of date during the break in employment for the purposes of providing childcare. The performance of tasks within the framework of the project has also contributed towards the development of care services provided by a variety of entities and facilities using the local infrastructure and human resources. The total budget earmarked for the actions referred to above amounted to EUR 15.2 million, with a total of 3643 final beneficiaries taking advantage of the support programme, with approximately 92% being women.

In years 2007-2013, the actions for equal opportunities for women on the labour market have continued within the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme. Until the end of the second quarter of year 2013, over 6.7 million individuals have commenced their participation in the projects, including 3.8 million women. According to the results of the evaluation study, 34% of women who were unemployed at the time of joining the project manage to subsequently find new jobs through their participation in EFS projects. Over two thirds of all women participating in the EFS projects believe that the project they participated in had a significant influence on the efforts aimed at finding a new job, with the same percentage stating that they take advantage of the knowledge and abilities obtained in the course of the project at their current place of employment.

Furthermore, in 2013 Poland has adopted an family action plan which provides for an increase in employment among women as well as measures facilitating work-life balance and ensuring equal opportunities for men and women. In this context it is worth mentioning the continuing state financial aid for communes and non-public entities for the purposes of establishment and operation of care centres for children below the age of 3, the introduction of a parental leave which may be used by the child's mother, father or by both parents before the child reaches the first year of age (with the option to combine parental leave with employment) and the introduction of variable working hours in corporations, which would make it possible to strike a better balance between professional and family life. There are also plans for further changes in the field of active labour market policy (within the framework of the amendment of the *act on employment promotion and labour market institutions* dated April 20, 2004) - instruments which encourage parents to return to the labour market after a parental leave (such as telework grants or job activation benefits).

Over the last few years, the government has also implemented projects designated as "Reconciliation of professional and family roles of men and women" as well as "Gender mainstreaming as a tool of change on the labour market". The government is also currently continuing the implementation of the project designated as "Social and economic activation of women on a local and regional level".

Among other activities currently performed by the government, aimed at supporting the gender equality policy, one also needs to take into account the following:

- actions performed within the framework of the ministerial support programme for care centres for children below the age of 3 (the MALUCH programme);
- competitions held within the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme with respect to projects in the field of implementation and promotion of solutions aimed at the reconciliation of professional and family life as well as facilitating the return to work following a gap caused by childbirth and childcare;
- annual competitions held by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for non-governmental organizations in the field of providing equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market (PLN 300 thousand, this year's competition being intended to support the activities of NGOs conducive towards labour activation of women returning to the labour market following periods of absence caused by child or dependent care).

The primary objective of the actions in question is promoting the concept of equal opportunities as well as the modern family model in which both men and women have equal rights. This is because changing the way of thinking about equal opportunities issues, including, in particular, the question of equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market, requires more than just a discussion on the situation of women on the labour market; this issue also needs to be addressed with respect to men, the family and the social environment as such.

4) Actions for the prevention of violence against women

The rights of the victims of crime, including women, who, as victims of gender-based violence, have certain special needs which need to be addressed, have been on the agenda of the Polish Government for some time now. The adoption in 2005 of the act on the prevention of domestic violence has resulted in the establishment of a legal framework which makes it possible to provide direct support to persons suffering from domestic violence, most of whom, according to the available data, are women. The amendment of the act in question, which entered into force in 2010, has introduced a number of new solutions aimed at increasing the efficiency of the prevention and support system. The National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence supplements other, purely legislative, solutions. The Programme is implemented at regular intervals and is intended to coordinate the actions taken by the government administration within the scope of preventing and counteracting family violence. In addition, a number of social and information campaigns is being organised on both national and regional levels (e.g. "16 days against violence").

The rights of the victims of violence constituted one of the priorities of the Polish Presidency in the EU Council, during which a general approach to Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (adopted October 2012) was adopted. At the present moment, works are underway on the implementation of the provisions of the Directive into the Polish legal order, including, in particular, the implementation of the appropriate level of measures intended to ensure the protection of victims of crime.

Following December 2012, when Poland signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, works have

commenced on the application intended to facilitate the ratification thereof. Even before the Convention has been signed, actions have been adopted with the aim of ensuring the full compliance of the Polish legal order with the provisions thereof. One of the measures introduced has been the amendment of the Polish Criminal Code which makes it possible for rape to be prosecuted *ex officio*. Enhanced procedures for the taking of statements from the victims of sexual offences (single hearings, establishment of a network of special, “victim-friendly” hearing rooms) have also been introduced in order to ensure a sense of greater security among victims and to prevent double victimization.

What has contributed to this success? Describe measures taken in terms of policies and mechanisms to maintain or build on this success.

THE NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR EQUAL TREATMENT AS AN INSTRUMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM

The National Action Programme for Equal Treatment is a document which, in accordance with the act on the implementation of certain EU regulations in the field of equal treatment dated December 3, 2010 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2010, no. 254, item 1700, as amended), is prepared by the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment. In accordance with art. 22 of the act, the Plenipotentiary prepares and submits to the Council of Ministers the National Action Programme for Equal Treatment, specifying the objectives and priorities of actions for equal treatment, including, in particular, in the following areas:

- 1) increasing the social awareness of the issue of equal treatment, including the causes and consequences of violations of the equal treatment principle;
- 2) counteracting violations of the equal treatment principle;
- 3) cooperation with social partners, non-governmental organizations and other entities in the field of equal treatment.

The National Action Programme for Equal Treatment designates medium-term objectives and tools of government policy for equal treatment. The National Action Programme for Equal Treatment forms the basis for the implementation of the tasks of the state in the field of equal treatment and non-discrimination. The objectives and actions specified in the Programme remain consistent with the priorities and directions for state actions provided in other government documents.

- the Long-Term Development Strategy “Poland 2030. The Third Wave of Modernity”,
- the National Development Strategy 2020,
- the Human Capital Development Strategy 2020,
- the National Reform Programme for the Implementation of the “Europe 2020” Strategy,
- the Programme for the Roma Community in Poland 2004-2013,
- the National Action Plan for Employment 2012-2014,
- the National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence,
- Migration policy of Poland – the current state of play and proposed actions,
- the Gender Equality Strategy 2010-2015,
- the European Pact for Gender Equality for Years 2011-2020.

In Poland, pursuant to the act referred to above, the performance of tasks pertaining to the implementation of the equal treatment principle were entrusted to the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and the Ombudsman. It needs to be emphasized, however, that every minister operating in the field specified in the act on government administration departments dated September 4, 1997 (Dz.U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2007, no. 65, item 437, as amended) remains responsible for implementing the equal treatment policy and the prevention of discriminatory practices within the scope of his or her own competences.

Furthermore, in accordance with the horizontal social policy of the European Union and the recommendations of the UN Beijing Platform for Action, the principle of equality between men and women is to be incorporated into mainstream actions at the central, regional and local levels. The equality between men and women constitutes one of the fundamental principles of the European Union guaranteed in its Treaties and remains one of the principal objectives and goals of the European Union, while the incorporation of the principle of equality between men and women into all its activities constitutes one of the general objectives of the Union, which is expressly provided by art. 2 and 3 of the Treaty on the European Union and art. 8 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union.

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, the incorporation of the gender equality perspective is a process during which an evaluation is made as to how each contemplated action (including legislation, policies and programmes within all fields and at all levels) influences the situation of men and women. This strategy is intended to ensure that the problems and experiences of both men and women are taken into account in the process of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies in all areas and at all levels, so that men and women can take advantage thereof to the same extent.

The general objective of the equal treatment policy is to ensure, insofar as practicable, the elimination of discriminatory practices from the Polish society. This objective entails the need to influence the process of enactment and application of the law, the institutional order and social conduct in a way which ensures that the principle of equal treatment laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland as well as the applicable national laws and international instruments is complied with. The equal treatment policy is horizontal in nature and pertains to a variety of areas of public sector policies implemented in areas allocated to individual departments of government administration.

The National Action Plan for Equal Treatment contains the primary objectives of anti-discrimination policy for years 2013-2016. The time horizon adopted for the Programme has been designated in a way which makes it possible to take into account the dynamics of the changes in social, political and economic situation of the country as well as the possible related changes in legislation. Bearing in mind the possible changes in the process of implementation of the equal treatment policy, it would not be advisable to draw up plans for the first implementation stage in a long-term perspective.

- b) What are the country's three to five major challenges in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform

for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly? Why are these considered to be the major challenges?

The main problems of Polish women are:

- discrimination on the labour market (low employment rate among women, gender pay gap, glass ceiling, vertical and horizontal segregation on the labour market etc.),
- implementation of system solutions in the field of reconciliation of professional, family and private life.
- low participation rate in public life among women,
- violence against women,

Discrimination of women on the labour market and in the social security system

The policy for women, intended to ensure that they benefit from equal opportunities in all aspects of life, is an issue of particular importance to the state. Gender is one of the few causes of discrimination to which a separate article in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland has been devoted. According to Article 33.1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, “Men and women in the Republic of Poland are accorded equal rights in family, political, social and economic life”, while section 2 adds: “Men and women shall have equal rights, in particular, regarding education, employment and promotion, and shall have the right to equal compensation for work of similar value, to social security, to hold offices, and to receive public honours and decorations.”

Appropriate policies and affirmative actions intended to ensure actual equality, i.e. equal opportunities for men and women, appear both on the domestic level and on the EU level.² In spite of these efforts, women are still at a disadvantage when compared to men in all regions of the world, including the most affluent, well-developed countries of the EU. Despite the measures adopted by the Polish government, the position of women on the labour market is still less advantageous than in the case of men. This fact is evidenced, inter alia, by the following phenomena:

- lower labour market participation,
- lower average earnings of professionally active women,
- lower retirement benefits,
- significantly higher level of unpaid household work, including, in particular, work related to the provision of care to children and the chronically ill,
- lower level of participation in government and other decision-making bodies (the share of women in management boards, supervisory boards and other corporate decision-making bodies is approximately 12%, while the percentage of women MPs in the Polish Sejm amounts to 24%),
- lower representation in the media, and
- lack of full social agreement on affirmative actions and actions aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for men and women.

² Art. 8 Consolidated version of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (Official Journal of the European Union C83/47 dated 30.03.2010).

Compared to men, women have a less advantageous position on the labour market. In 2011, the employment rate of persons aged 15-64 was 43% for women and 59% for men, i.e. 16 per cent less for women than for men.³ The data provided by the Central Statistical Office demonstrates that, among professionally inactive women in working age, caring for children or dependents and household duties are one of the main reasons due to which women give up their jobs (approximately 36%).

Women who care for children or dependents face a particularly difficult situation on the labour market.

Women's situation on the labour market depends on the following factors:

- the existing examples within the family, often linked to the traditional allocation of roles within the family,
- gender stereotyping and associated prejudice,
- social and economic consequences of educational segregation and the segregation of gender roles at early stages of educational processes,
- problems with accessing care institutions as well as the social security system which provides insufficient support to persons providing care for others.

The labour market is founded upon a “male idiom” which results in a man being treated as an “all-purpose employee” and the principal breadwinner, whereas women are deemed to be “high-risk employees” due to the possible gaps in employment caused by their absence at work due to childcare duties. The stereotypical notion that it is only women who become involved in childcare results in their exclusion from the labour market; as a consequence, women lack employment continuity, professional privileges, appropriate security upon retirement as well as independence and the ability to realize life ambitions which go beyond the traditional division of roles. Where a woman chooses a given path of life for herself, such situation may not be viewed as discriminatory.⁴ There are, however, many different life choices which a woman may make. Some women wish to remain professionally active regardless of their family situation, other do not aspire to a family; some women have partners who decide to take over the duties of childcare. In addition, there is also the phenomenon of self-discrimination among women, who become convinced of the inferior quality of their work (which may for example lead to situations where women demand a lower salary than their male counterparts).⁵

Gender pay gap

Pursuant to art. 18^{3c} of the Polish Labour Code, employees have the right to equal remuneration for identical work or work having an identical value. The remuneration in question shall include all salary components regardless of the name and nature thereof as well as other work-related benefits granted to employees in both pecuniary and non-pecuniary form. According to the provisions of the Labour Code, works having an equivalent value are works the performance of

³ Economic activities of Polish citizens in years 2008-2011, Central Statistical Office (GUS) 2013.

⁴ D. Duch-Krzystoszek, “Kto rządzi w rodzinie” (“Who Rules the Family”), IfiS PAN, Warsaw 2007, in: *Strategiczne rekomendacje na rzecz równego traktowania (Strategic Recommendations for Equal Treatment)*, Jagiellonian University 2012, Document prepared within the framework of the “Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard” project.

⁵ *Strategiczne rekomendacje na rzecz równego traktowania (Strategic Recommendations for Equal Treatment)*, Jagiellonian University 2012, Document prepared within the framework of the “Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard” project.

which requires the employees performing them to possess comparable professional qualifications certified by way of documents specified under separate provisions or otherwise confirmed through professional experience and practice, as well as comparable responsibility and effort.

Regardless of the existing legal regulations, the differences in the salaries of men and women remain substantial. The studies of the salary structure according to profession, performed by the Central Statistical Office, indicate that gender remains an important factor determining the amount of remuneration. In 2010, the relations between salaries of men and women have improved.

Whereas in 2002 the monthly average gross remuneration of women amounted to 83.1% of the average remuneration of men, in 2010 this figure has climbed to 85.0%. This salary ratio has increased by 5.2 pp. in the public sector, although in the private sector it has decreased by 3.5 pp.

Table: Average monthly gross remuneration (in PLN) according to ownership sector and gender for October 2002-2010

Year of study Z-12 ¹⁾	Total			Public sector			Private sector		
	<i>in total</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>in total</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>in total</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>
2002	2229.80	2425.00	2015.79	2343.39	2680.77	2102.37	2132.22	2275.96	1903.35
2004	2368.52	2571.64	2150.44	2527.63	2859.63	2303.83	2244.24	2422.58	1968.01
2006	2654.13	2903.68	2385.68	2869.62	3238.17	2616.98	2505.53	2746.07	2151.93
2008	3232.07	3557.24	2892.88	3432.29	3899.32	3151.61	3110.28	3425.47	2651.50
2010	3543.50	3831.73	3256.06	3804.70	4252.54	3556.64	3367.68	3662.17	2934.18

1) Z-12 – representative studies of salary structure according to professions within units with more than 9 employees.

When the data is divided according to large professional groups, the most significant difference in average overall gross remuneration for October 2010 for men and women was recorded for the “Industrial workers and craftspeople” group. In this group, the average remuneration ratio between women and men was 67.1%. The least substantial difference was recorded for the “Clerical workers” professional group, where the average remuneration for women amounted to 97.9% of the average remuneration for men. In 2010, with respect to the average monthly gross salaries received by women compared to those received by men (compared to 2002) the following observations were made:

a) a decrease in the differences between monthly gross salaries in the following large professional groups (*in percentage points*):

- | | |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.3 pp. | 3. Technicians and miscellaneous mid-level personnel |
| 3.8 pp. | 7. Industrial workers and craftspeople |
| 3.7 pp. | 2. Specialist employees |
| 2.9 pp. | 5. Personal service providers and salespersons |
| 0.4 pp. | 1. Representatives of public authorities, higher officials and drivers |

b) an increase in the differences between monthly gross salaries in the following large professional groups (*in percentage points*):

1.0 pp.	4. Clerical workers
7.3 pp.	9. Workers engaged in performance of simple tasks
7.5 pp.	8. Machinery and equipment operators and assembly workers
13.8 pp.	6. Farmers, gardeners, foresters and fishermen

The average monthly gross remuneration (in PLN) divided according to large professional groups and gender for October 2002 and 2010 is presented in Table A.11.2.

Due to the persistent wage differences, the Polish Government is taking actions aimed at the dissemination of information on the existing legal provisions which is effected, inter alia, through the implementation of projects co-financed from EU funds as well as through participation in awareness raising activities and campaigns of the European Commission. Poland is one of 5 countries which have taken part in the information campaign aimed at providing society with information on the existing wage differences between men and women in 2009, organised at the EU level. The main advertising media used in the 2009 campaign were adverts on buses, containing information on equal pay for men and women, as well as citylight vitrines on bus stops. Activities comprising this information campaign were only carried out in Warsaw, Brussels, Budapest, Madrid and Berlin. In 2010, all EU countries have taken part in this campaign. As in the case of the 2009 campaign, citylight vitrines and billboards have appeared in capital cities of various countries, presenting information on wage differences between men and women. In addition, a poster, brochure, flyer and presentation prepared by the European Commission for the second edition of the campaign were also actively promoted. From 2010 onwards, the European Equal Pay Day has been celebrated in the EU, comprising conferences, seminars and other information and promotional events aimed at raising public awareness of the issue of gender pay gap. The Equal Pay Day celebrations are held annually.

In 2013, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment has asked the Supreme Audit Office (NIK) to perform an audit of State Treasury Companies and communal companies in order to determine whether they comply with the requirement that men and women must receive equal remuneration for work which is identical or which has an equivalent value. In this connection, the Supreme Audit Office has, of its own initiative, performed an audit of government administration entities, local government entities, sole shareholder companies established by the State Treasury and sole shareholder companies established by local government entities in five provinces from different regions of the Republic of Poland. The audit has covered 31 entities in total. The ministries and central authorities covered by the audit included: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Science and Higher Education, the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Province Office in Olsztyn as well as the Śląskie Province Office in Katowice. The audit has also extended to the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment (with respect to the performance of actions aimed at ensuring compliance and implementation of the equal treatment principle with regard to wage equality between men and women. The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment has received a positive assessment from the Supreme Audit Office in this regard. The actions specified in articles 21-23 of the act on the implementation of certain EU regulations in the field of equal treatment dated December 3, 2010

were performed in an adequate and diligent manner. They involved, in particular, the coordination of inter-ministerial actions pertaining to equal treatment, counteracting discrimination and implementing the equal treatment principle with respect, inter alia, to gender issues.

The audit performed by the Supreme Audit Office has shown that while wage differences between men and women do in fact exist, it is extremely difficult to make an unequivocal assessment as to whether the principle of equal pay for men and women is in fact complied with due to the fact that no tool that would enable the monitoring of wage differences and no objective indicators which would make it possible to determine the influence of individual factors on the amount of remuneration have so far been implemented in Poland.

Challenges in the field of policies for equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market:

1. with respect to the shaping of social processes - encouraging changes in terms of social awareness which are necessary for the purposes of eliminating gender stereotyping from both the labour market and from society as such - this task requires both time and joint action performed both by the government and by non-governmental organizations, with the support and participation of social partners.
2. with respect to the labour market - the development of policies conducive towards the promotion of employment and entrepreneurship among women in all age groups as well as the development of measures aimed at supporting the reconciliation of professional and family life, including flexible forms of employment, institutional childcare solutions as well as counteracting gender pay gap and counteracting horizontal segregation on the labour market - the phenomenon of feminization of certain professions and sectors of the economy continues to occur in Poland, with most positions in administration, social care, education and certain healthcare sectors (including, in particular, the nursing profession) being taken by women. The sectors listed above are characterized by low wage levels, unlike other professions in which men remain the dominant group.
3. with respect to education and training - the development and promotion of various forms of continuing education as well as encouraging women to study science and engineering.

These challenges pertain to the three main areas in which women operate within society and which determine the overall situation of women. Economic issues, i.e. issues relating to employment, salary, living conditions of women in Polish society and retirement conditions, remain the primary concern. The principal tools for the implementation of these goals are legislative measures and information and promotional activities aimed at inspiring a shift in social awareness and attitudes.

Processes inhibiting the implementation of policies within the scope specified above

Cultural and social factors which point towards the man - and not the woman - as the one family member who should work for a living and maintain the family household continue to form a substantial obstacle on the path towards change in the situation of women. It is for the above reasons that women are the ones who work part-time or interrupt their professional activities in order to care for children or dependents more often. It hardly needs a mention here that this, in turn, often results in women being offered lower salaries for the work they perform. The 2013 European Commission report on gender equality points towards the fact that the recent economic crisis had a particularly strong impact on young women, who find it more difficult to find jobs than young men do. The situation of women on the labour market confirms the fact that stereotypical perception of the roles of men and women is still prevalent in many societies and brings about very serious consequences for the functioning of society, economic development and the labour market.

It is therefore necessary to perform a variety of actions aimed at promoting gender equality, eliminating differences in the treatment of men and women with respect to employment, counteracting gender stereotyping and encouraging the strengthening of the position held by women. In the course of these actions, particular emphasis must be placed on the following issues:

- the role of men (gender equality issues are not confined solely to women),
- the promotion of good practices with respect to gender-assigned roles in areas such as the labour market, education and politics,
- the application of various tools aimed at ensuring equality,
- ensuring cooperation in this regard with all actors in the area of political, economic and social life of the country.

The family model and the labour market

The traditional division of functions between men and women continues to influence the opinions and mentality of a substantial portion of the Polish society. In the opinion polls performed⁶, half of all respondents agree with the statement that “men should work for a living while women should stay at home and care for the children” (Chart no. 8). The statement referred to above is contested mostly by women, younger people, people with higher education and residents of larger cities. At the same time, more than 80% of all respondents agree with the statement that “a professionally active mother can perform her parental duties just as well as a mother who is not professionally active”. As regards the selection of the preferred family life model, half of all respondents (56%) have opted for a partnership model wherein both spouses or partners remain professionally active, sharing their household and parental duties on an equal basis. The second most popular option (19% of all respondents) has been the traditional model in which the man remains professionally active, earning a sufficient salary to cater for the needs of his family, while the woman performs household and parental duties. 10% of all respondents have opted for a mixed model in which both spouses/partners remain professionally active, with

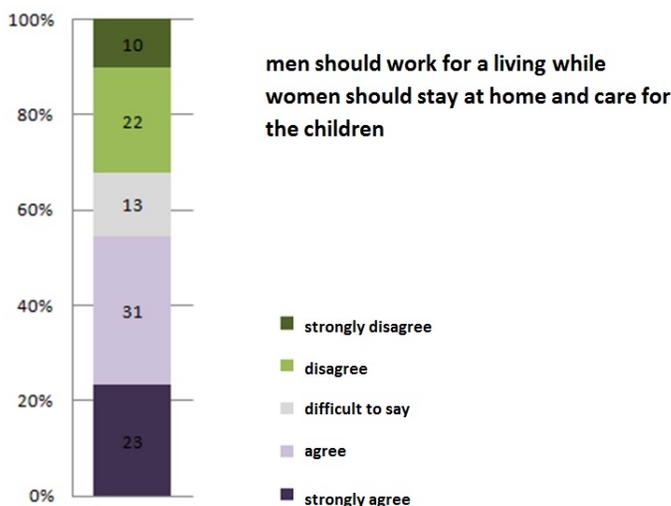
⁶Opinion poll report performed within the framework of the “Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard” project (CEAPP, 2012).

the woman bearing most of the household and parental responsibilities. The partnership model has more supporters among women (58%, compared to 45% men), while the traditional model has more followers among men. According to the research performed⁷, the number of individuals who believe that they are in fact implementing the partnership model in practice is 28%. 26% of all respondents believe that their family is based on the mixed model, while 20% believe that it remains true to the traditional model.

The mixed family model, based on the notion of the woman working in a “dual capacity” leads to women becoming overworked, even though they can serve as “breadwinners” for the family just as men do. The unequal division of responsibilities between men and women persists despite both of them performing paid work, even if it is the woman’s earnings which serve as the main source of income for the family. One of the mechanisms which generate inequalities on the labour market is the economics of care, i.e. the phenomenon which causes the costs of caring for children or dependents to become shifted upon women.⁸

There is a strong correlation between mechanisms provided for within the framework of pro-family policies and the situation of men and women on the labour market.

Chart 1. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statement that “a man should work for a living, while a woman should stay at home and care for the children” (n=1715)



Source: Opinion poll report performed within the framework of the “Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard” project (CEAPP, 2012).

The presence of children in the household has a different impact on the position of men and women on the labour market. The data provided by the Central Statistical Office demonstrates that in 2011 the employment rate among men who had children was 10% higher than among men

⁷ CBOS, 2012 [in:] Opinion poll report performed within the framework of the “Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard” project, (CEAPP, 2012).

⁸ Strategic recommendations for equal treatment, Jagiellonian University, 2012, Document prepared within the framework of the “Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard” project.

who did not; for women, the opposite was true. The employment rate among women who had children was 12% lower than among those women who did not.

In 2011, household and family duties were named as the main reason for not taking up paid work by 13% of all non-working women and 3% of all non-working men.⁹ In 2011, approximately 11.3% women and 1.5% men performed household duties, with the corresponding figures for 2012 being 12.2% and 1.6% respectively. Among men in the 18-24 age group, 0.5% performed household duties; for the 25-35 age group, the figure was 0.9%. Among women, the relevant figures were 6% and 16% respectively.¹⁰

In 2012, the percentage of individuals who declared that they worked full-time peaked in the 35-44 age group for both men and women. Women have stated that they worked part-time on more occasions than men did; however, the percentage of women working part-time decreases significantly with age; among men, part-time work is relatively the most popular among the youngest and the oldest respondents, being the least popular in the 35-44 age group.¹¹

As the research commissioned by employer has demonstrated, women with children were offered lower salaries both than childless women and then men (whether childless or not). 15% of all working women believed pregnancy and childbirth to be the causes of their lack of promotion, while 22% believed those occurrences to be the causes of not being offered a higher salary.¹² According to the reports pertaining to the situation of mothers and parents on the labour market¹³, women returning to work following the break in professional activities caused by childbirth and childcare are also particularly affected by discrimination. Specifically, women are often dismissed following their return from maternity and childcare leave.

Other forms of discrimination of women following their return from maternity/childcare leaves as well as pregnant women include: demotion, lack of promotion, failures to comply with the provisions on the protection of pregnant women and of employees raising children. In addition, the situation of women who wish to return to work following a childcare leave is exacerbated by the lack of appropriate support in the form of training programmes aimed at increasing their qualifications or updating their knowledge following a childcare leave. In the light of the above, actions aimed at increasing the participation of men in the process of child care and upbringing need to be intensified. The greater prevalence of a model in which both parents are jointly responsible for the performance of parental duties may result in a change of perception of female employees among employers. Other factors which may have a significant influence in this regard are changes of company regulations pertaining to the career model applied as well as enhanced talent acquisition and retention. Such change would also be beneficial for men, who could attain

⁹ Economic activities of Polish citizens in years 2008-2011, Central Statistical Office (GUS) 2013.

¹⁰ 2012 Human Capital Balance Summary.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² D. Kurtek, "Wynagrodzenia kobiet po urlopach macierzyńskich" ("Salaries of women after maternity leaves"), 2009, [in:] Strategic recommendations for equal treatment, Jagiellonian University, 2012, Document prepared within the framework of the "Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard" project.

¹³ "Employer Plans", report prepared by CBOS, 2010; „Godzenie ról rodzinnych i zawodowych” ("Reconciling family and professional roles"), Wóycicka, Matysiak, Sztanderska, advisory report commissioned by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2020, [in:] Strategic recommendations for equal treatment, Jagiellonian University, 2012, Document prepared within the framework of the "Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard" project.

a greater degree of self-realization in their capacity as parents. Today, both the career model based upon the notion of round-the-clock availability as well as gender stereotyping make it difficult - if not impossible - for men to attain full self-realization with respect to their parental duties. The discrimination against men is particularly acute in the area of childcare, which manifests itself during legal disputes involving family matters. The manner in which legal provisions are enacted has a significant influence on the process of shaping the attitudes and consciousness of the public. It is essential to implement promotional activities pertaining to the benefits of active participation of men in the process of child care and upbringing. The promotional activities in question should be performed on a continuous basis and utilize a variety of media.

In the context of the facts presented above, it is clear that the primary cause of the lower level of activity and efficiency of women on the labour market is their greater involvement in family life. The amount of work performed by women for the benefit of their families contributes, on one hand, towards economic development, the increase of the quality of life, the social stability of the country and the retention of the traditional system of values which remains of great importance to the Poles, while also, on the other hand, bringing about negative economic consequences for the women themselves. The breaks in employment caused by childcare duties and the selection of positions and professions which makes it possible to reconcile family and professional roles result in lower wages and pensions while also forcing women to postpone the moment when they decide to form a family and to have their first children - a phenomenon which is extremely hazardous for national development. The state is therefore under an obligation to ensure the buffering of the costs of functioning of families and to facilitate the equal sharing of duties and reconciling professional and family roles by men and women.

Over the course of the last few years, a number of actions were taken which are aimed at achieving those goals. Facilitating measures were introduced with respect to sanitary and facility regulations¹⁴ pertaining to individuals interested in establishing nurseries (which have now ceased to be treated as healthcare facilities, thereby no longer being subject to the rigorous provisions applicable to such facilities); in addition, the selection of lawfully permitted forms of providing care to children have become more varied.¹⁵ The provisions pertaining to the establishment and provision of other forms of preschool education have also become less restrictive.¹⁶

The “MALUCH” Programme

Within the framework of the actions for the equal treatment of men and women and for increasing the participation of women in the functioning of society, the Department of Family Policy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has, since 2011, been implementing the

¹⁴ Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy dated March 25, 2011, on facility and sanitary requirements

pertaining to nurseries and children’s clubs (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2011, no. 69, item 367, as amended).

¹⁵ Act on provision of care services to children below the age of 3 dated February 4, 2011 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2011, no. 45, item 235, as amended).

¹⁶ Regulation of the Minister of National Education dated August 31, 2010, on the types of miscellaneous forms of preschool education, the conditions for the establishment and organization thereof as well as the manner of their operation (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 161, item 1080 as amended)

ministerial programme for the development of care institutions for children below the age of 3 (the “MALUCH” (“toddler”) programme). Owing to the support for the establishment of childcare centres, women can now make a quicker return to the labour market following childbirth. In 2011, within the framework of the “MALUCH” programme, a total of approximately PLN 15.2 million were allocated for the establishment of childcare centres; in 2012, the amount allocated was approximately PLN 22.3 million, increasing to approximately PLN 70.4 million in 2013. Taking into account the number of the newly established care centres, in 2011 a total of 3311 care centres for children aged 0-3 were established within the framework of the “MALUCH” programme, with a further 1824 being created in 2012; in 2013, according to initial estimates, the number of care centres established was 9199.

Actions for equal opportunities with respect to access to social security

By virtue of the *act amending the act on social security system and the Banking Law* (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 71, item 609) dated April 24, 2009, changes were introduced with respect to the scope of individuals subject to mandatory retirement and disability insurance due to being in receipt of maternity benefits or benefits equivalent to maternity benefits in case of concurrent insurance entitlements. Following the entry into force of the act, individuals in receipt of maternity benefits and performing non-agricultural or miscellaneous gainful activities during that time shall remain insured due to being in receipt of the maternity benefit (with contributions being financed from the state budget) and are under no obligation to make additional social security contributions due to the pursuit of non-agricultural activities. This solution is intended to facilitate the reconciliation of parental duties and professional activities, allowing women to remain active on the labour market.

By virtue of the *act amending the act on social security system and certain other acts* dated July 26, 2013 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] item 983), regulations were introduced for those individuals who decide to discontinue their professional activities (non-agricultural activities, cooperation, performing work under contracts of mandate) in connection with personally providing care to a child aged 0-5 (or, in case of disabled children, until the age of 18) for a period of 3 and 6 years respectively, as well as for individuals who did not have any insurance so far and who do not take up paid work due to the need to provide childcare. Those individuals who were insured shall, in connection with the personal provision of childcare, be covered by retirement and disability insurance provided by the Social Security Institution (ZUS), while those individuals who had not been covered by insurance shall be covered by retirement insurance, also provided by the Social Security Institution. The insurance contributions shall be financed by the state budget.

Additionally, in May 2012, the Sejm has passed an act which provides for gradually increasing the retirement age to 67 and matching the retirement age for men and women.

Until the end of 2012 the retirement age had been 60 for women and 65 for men. By raising the retirement age from January 1, 2013 by 1 month every four months, the target level shall be reached by 2020 for men and by 2040 for women. The new regulations will apply to women

born after December 31, 1952 and to men born after December 31, 1947. At present, the statutory retirement age is 60 years and 3 months for women and 65 years and 3 months for men.

For the subsequent retirees the longer period of professional activity will result in relatively higher benefits due to the fact that its amount shall be determined not only by the contribution made by the insured into the system, expressed by way duration of professional activity and the contributions paid (i.e. the increase of the numerator in the pension calculation formula), but also the subsequent duration of the retiree's life (later retirement results in a decrease of the denominator in the pension calculation formula).

Low rate of participation in public life among women

Despite the enactment of the quota act and the increase of the percentage of women in the Polish parliament in 2011, the issue of access to positions of power and other top positions for women remains a significant challenge in Poland. Discrimination with respect to the access to the highest political positions continues to occur - despite the current act which guarantees women 35% of all slots on candidate lists, women deputies constitute a mere 24% of all deputies to the Polish Sejm. The limited number of women deputies fails to reflect the importance of women in society. The mechanism which is responsible for this state of affairs may be the allocation of lower slots on the candidate lists to women candidates. The main barriers to the promotion of women to prominent positions, however, are the cultural and mental mechanisms which result in women being perceived as inextricably bound to the private sphere of life; as a consequence, their life ambitions are seen as pre-determined. Research performed by the Public Affairs Institute reveals the mechanisms used for the purposes of both promotion and elimination of women on the lists of candidates in both local and parliamentary elections. Women were allocated a shorter airtime and were presented in political advertisements as performing household duties. The results of the research referred to above also describe the mechanisms governing the local and parliamentary election campaigns with respect to the presence of women candidates and issues which are relevant to women.¹⁷ These research results also demonstrate that women are not recommended as candidates for prestigious positions within the executive branch, i.e. mayors or province governors; neither are they included in party authorities. The elections which have taken place so far have shown that there are no difficulties in finding women candidates and that these candidates have excellent political skills and remain involved in the development of the democratic society. The indicated problems may be the consequence of internal candidate selection mechanisms. This phenomenon should be subjected to in-depth monitoring.

Violence against women

Within the Polish legal system, protection and support are available regardless of gender. The provisions of the act on counteracting family violence dated July 29, 2005, contain an obligation to accord protection to all categories of individuals who experience violence within

¹⁷ The Public Affairs Institute - <http://www.isp.org.pl/programy,program-prawa-i-instytucji,projekty,kobiety-na-listach-wyborczych,639.html>.

the family: women, men, children, the elderly and disabled persons. The act referred to above pertains to violence defined as intentional actions or omissions (whether isolated or recurring) which violate the rights or personal interests of a family member, including, in particular, where such actions place family members at a risk of loss of life or limb, interfere with their dignity, bodily integrity, freedom (including sexual freedom), cause damage to their physical or mental health and causing moral harm and suffering of persons subjected to violence.

According to the data provided by the National Police Headquarters, during the first half of 2012, there has been a total of 36 640 victims of family violence, with 64.6% being women, 25.5% being minors, and 9.9% being men. The gender of victims of violence below the age of 18 is unknown, since the current forms used for collecting statistical information on violence do not take this feature into account. Most perpetrators of violence against family members were men, who constituted 92.8% of the total number of all perpetrators, i.e. 24 195 individuals during the first half of 2012. A mere 6.6% of perpetrators of violence were women; minors accounted for a negligible 0.6%.¹⁸ Statistically, most individuals who experience family violence are women, followed by categories of individuals whose gender is not stated, i.e. minors, the elderly, disabled persons. Children - witnesses of violence - often also fall victim to domestic abuse. According to the report based on the research prepared by the Millward Brown SMG/KRC Institute, commissioned by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, in December 2012 women accounted for 62% of all individuals suffering from domestic violence whose situation was examined by the interdisciplinary team and workgroups in 2012 within the framework of implementation of the “Blue Cards” procedure.¹⁹

Violence constitutes one of the mechanisms of discrimination against women, who experience violent behaviour due to their gender, which means that “violence is directed against women either due to the fact that they are women, or constitutes a type of violence which affects women in a particularly acute manner”.²⁰ Such state of affairs is reinforced by the gender stereotypes still prevalent in public consciousness. The effective counteraction of violence against women requires, inter alia, changing the cultural and social patterns of behaviour of both men and women so as to eliminate prejudice, habits, traditions and other practices based on the idea of inferiority of women or on stereotypical roles of men and women. On December 18, 2012, the Republic of Poland has signed the Convention. Legislative works are currently underway with the aim of ensuring the full implementation of Convention provisions in the Polish legal order.

The 2005 act on counteracting family violence imposes an obligation on the Council of Ministers to adopt the National Programme for the Prevention of Family Violence; it also imposes obligations pertaining to the monitoring of the implementation of this Programme upon the minister in charge of social security. The main objective of the Programme is restricting the scale of domestic violence. The achievement of this goal requires participation of both government, local government and non-governmental institutions and organizations operating in Poland.

¹⁸ Report on the implementation of the “Blue Cards” procedure by organizational units of the police during the first half of 2012, Warsaw, March 2012.

¹⁹ Diagnosis pertaining to the implementation of tasks stemming from the act on counteracting family violence, performed by interdisciplinary teams/workgroups, as well as the implementation of the “Blue Cards” procedure on the basis of

the regulation on the “Blue Cards” procedure and the “Blue Card” form templates.

²⁰ General Recommendation No. 19 of the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

The main recurring activities performed within the framework of the National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence for years 2006-2016 include:

- providing comprehensive aid to various categories of victims of domestic abuse within the framework of specialized centres for the support of victims of domestic violence;
- implementation of correctional and educational programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence;
- providing co-financing for Province Marshals within the scope of implementation of training programmes for “First Contact” employees;
- organizing Nationwide Conferences;
- analyzing the phenomenon of domestic violence in Poland;
- organizing nationwide social campaigns for the prevention of domestic violence.

From 2008 onwards, a total of 36 support centres providing 24-hour aid to victims of family violence have been operating in Poland. For 2013, the number of active specialized support centres for victims of family violence is 35. Contact information of specialized support centres for victims of family violence is available on the www.mpips.gov.pl website.

Apart from catering to the most basic needs of the victims, specialized support centres provide professional medical, social, psychological and legal aid. Specialist support centres for victims of family violence operate on the basis of standards contained in the regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy dated February 22, 2011 *on the standard for basic services provided by specialized support centres for victims of family violence, the qualifications of employees of such centres, specific directions of educational and correctional activities performed with respect to perpetrators of family violence as well as the qualifications of persons tasked with the performance of educational and correctional activities* (Dz.U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 50, item 159) - (prior to 2011, the applicable rules in this regard were contained in the regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy *on the standard for basic services provided by specialized support centres for victims of family violence and the specific directions of educational and correctional activities* dated July 6, 2006 (Dz.U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 127, item 890).

Specialized support centres for victims of family violence are under an obligation to comply with the applicable standards with respect to interventions, therapeutic and support activities and the provision of well-being services. The primary goal of these centres is to ensure the safety of victims of domestic abuse and to provide them with professional aid and support.

It is worth noting that an undisputed advantage derived from the establishment of the aforementioned centres is increasing the availability of professional aid for victims of domestic violence as well as improving their safety and protecting them from further acts of violence. The specialist nature of the centres makes it possible for them to provide support even in the most complicated cases, including the provision of support to the victims of particularly drastic cases of domestic abuse.

The support services of specialist centres is aimed at various categories of victims, including women, children, men, the elderly and disabled persons. Specialist centres perform therapeutic work aimed at children, who remain a special category of victims. The top priority for every

support centre is to cooperate, within the framework of interdisciplinary actions, with services and organizations dealing with the issues of prevention of domestic abuse in the given area.

Number of individuals taking advantage of support services provided by specialized support centres for victims of family violence

Number of individuals taking advantage of support services provided by specialized support centres for victims of family violence	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	7 590	7 554	8 676	8 727	8 485

Source: Reports from the implementation of the National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence for years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012.

In addition, training courses for “First Contact” employees are provided on the basis of the National Programme. Entities responsible for the implementation of training courses for “First Contact” employees provide such training on the basis of the “Guidelines for training courses in the area of counteracting family violence (for years 2012-2013)”, the preparation of which is required under the provisions of the act on counteracting family violence; the guidelines referred to above are prepared by the Monitoring Team for Counteracting Family Violence.

The participants of the training courses in question are representatives tasked with the performance of actions in the area of counteracting family violence. The training courses pertain mostly to the establishment of local systems for the prevention of domestic abuse on the basis of cooperation between interdisciplinary teams. In addition, themed courses were also organised, pertaining, inter alia, to the prevention of violence against women, providing support to victims of domestic abuse and victims of human trafficking, the implementation of correctional and educational programmes for perpetrators of family violence etc.

Number of “First Contact” employees participating in training courses organised by Province Marshals

Number of “First Contact” employees participating in training courses organised by Province Marshals	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	4 593	1 872	5 519	5 365	5 446

Source: Reports from the implementation of the National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence for years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012.

From 2008 onwards, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has been organizing nationwide conferences pertaining to the actions for the prevention of domestic abuse. The first of those conferences was dedicated to all categories of victims of family violence and the designation of priorities for providing support to this group of individuals.

Organizing annual nationwide conferences pertaining to issues related to the prevention of domestic violence constitutes an indispensable educational component for representatives tasked with the performance of actions in the area of prevention of domestic violence. The conferences referred to above allow for an exchange of experience and the sharing of knowledge; they also contribute towards the unification of nationwide standards of service. Every year about 120 professionals working in the field of the prevention of domestic violence participate in the conferences in question, including the Province Coordinators for the Implementation of the National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence.

One of the activities performed within the framework of the diagnostic strategies of the National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence is performing nationwide research surveys intended to determine the scope of this phenomenon. The surveys in question are performed on a recurring basis, once a year. All reports containing the results of the surveys for years 2008-2012 are available on the www.mpips.gov.pl website.

Another programme which is being implemented is the “Support for Local Government Units in the Establishment of a System for the Prevention of Family Violence” Programme. The subject of this Programme is providing co-financing for local government at the commune, district and province level for the purposes of establishment of an integrated system for counteracting domestic violence. The implementation of the “Support for Local Government Units in the Establishment of a System for the Prevention of Family Violence” Programme has begun in 2011, pursuant to article 8.6 and 8.7 of the act *on counteracting family violence* dated July 29, 2005 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 180, item 1493, as amended). The annual amount of PLN 3 000 000 is allocated to the Programme for the purposes of providing financial support to local government units in the process of implementation of local systems for counteracting family violence.

Specific objectives of the Programme are:

- performing actions aimed at ensuring the improvement of the situation of families facing the threat of domestic violence;
- performing pre-emptive actions in the area of prevention of domestic violence;
- adjusting the existing institutional infrastructure to the needs of individuals suffering from domestic violence;
- providing support to children and young people from families threatened by, or experiencing, domestic violence.

Describe the strategy (ies) that is (are) in place to address the challenges?

The strategic document in this regard is the National Action Programme for Equal Treatment. The structure of this document is based on key objectives, specific objectives and key actions leading to the attainment of objectives. Each objective has been allocated a timetable of actions, specifying the entities responsible for the given action and cooperating in the process of the performance thereof.

Insofar as the subject matter covered by the Beijing Platform is concerned, the following objectives may be identified:

- Increasing the standards of anti-discriminatory policies
- Monitoring the implementation of legal solutions consistent with the secondary legislation of the European Union as well as the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, ensuring the full and equal protection to all groups which are at risk of discriminatory practices.
- Implementing a system for the evaluation and monitoring of the equal treatment policy.
- Preparation, on the basis of data collected within the framework of public statistics, of a set of key indicators intended to monitor the situation of groups which are at risk of discriminatory practices.
- Establishment of an efficient mechanism for cooperation within the framework of government administration at both central and province levels.
- Increasing the level of knowledge on equal treatment among employees of public institutions (including judges, clerical workers and officers of law enforcement agencies).

Improving the situation with respect to gender equality on the labour market.

- Promoting solutions provided under the provisions of labour law with respect to the possibilities of sharing parental rights available to both parents in connection with childcare as well as with respect to the rights granted to women due to motherhood.
- Promoting the rights of employees and the self-employed related to childcare leaves.
- Development of childcare and care for dependents in order to provide support for the activities of men and women on the labour market.
- Promoting equality of access to decision-making positions for men and women.
- Eliminating gender pay gap between men and women working on the same positions or performing works having an equivalent value and quality (reducing the salary gap).
- Supporting women in the process of selection of career paths and supporting young women and girls in developing leadership capabilities.

- Promoting the partnership family model and the principle of equal treatment of both parents with respect to care and upbringing-related functions.

Enhancement of the existing laws and the application thereof with respect to the prevention of violence, including violence against women and domestic violence.

- Preparation of the application for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and implementation of the provisions of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council 2012/29/EU dated October 25, 2012, establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.
- Counteracting sexual violence.
- Introducing regulations pertaining to the issue of economic violence into the Polish legal system.
- Popularization of knowledge on issues related to the prevention of violence in a manner which takes gender perspective into account.
- Establishing a nationwide hotline for victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Increasing the quality of actions in the field of prevention, response and evaluation of tasks related to counteracting violent behaviours, including domestic violence.

- Taking the gender perspective into account in training programmes designed for authorities tasked with the prevention of violence, including domestic violence.

Increasing the standards of medical care provided to women, taking into account the issue of cultural diversity.

- Increasing accessibility to culturally adequate gynaecological care.

- c) What setbacks/reversals in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women have been experienced since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (if different from those already identified in b)?

What were the major factors that caused the setbacks?

Women's rights are inextricably linked to the level of social awareness of the issues of equal treatment and non-discrimination. The main barrier to exerting an effective influence on policies, laws and attitudes is the prevalent phenomenon of gender stereotyping.

What mitigation measures or other actions, if any, have been implemented to counter the setbacks?

The answer to this question is described in this document.

- d) What have been the main constitutional, legislative and/or legal developments in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

The quota act

In 2009, a citizen's bill on gender parity on electoral lists has been submitted to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland. The submission of this bill was the consequence of the campaign launched by the Congress of Women social movement²¹. Following the legislative works on the aforementioned bill, the new act on the amendment of the Electoral Law for commune councils, district councils and provincial assemblies, the Electoral law for the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and the Senate of the Republic of Poland as well as the Electoral Law for the European Parliament (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 34, item 172), known as the quota act, entered into force on March 3, 2011, after the end of the reporting period. This act amends the Electoral Laws for both the Sejm, the European Parliament and the commune councils, district councils and provincial assemblies. Pursuant to the said act, the electoral lists for the bodies referred to above may contain no less than 35% men and no less than 35% women. In the event that this requirement as to gender quotas is not complied with, the electoral list which falls foul of the said requirement may not be registered. The enactment of this act marks the first time that legal regulations which guarantee a specific percentage share of women on electoral lists have been implemented.

Parliamentary elections in 2011 showed a 4% rise in the representation of women in the Parliament (24% comparing to 20% in the former setup).

The act on counteracting family violence:

In 2003, at the initiative of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Men and Women, works have begun on regulations pertaining to the prevention of violence, with particular emphasis on violence against women and domestic violence. On July 29, 2005, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland passed the *act on counteracting family violence* (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2005, no. 180, item 1493), the primary objective of which has been to increase the

²¹ More information on the Congress of Women is provided in the section on cooperation with women's organizations.

efficiency of actions aimed at counteracting family violence as well as to initiate and support actions which involve increasing the public awareness of the causes and consequences of this type of violence.

Pursuant to the provisions of the act, family violence shall mean intentional actions or omissions (whether isolated or recurring) which violate the rights or personal interests of individuals specified in article 1 of the act, including, in particular, where such actions place those individuals at a risk of loss of life or limb, interfere with their dignity, bodily integrity, freedom (including sexual freedom), cause damage to their physical or mental health or cause moral harm and suffering of persons subjected to violence.

Actions intended to reduce the occurrence of domestic violence are performed through:

1. Systematic analysis of the phenomenon of domestic violence;
2. Increasing social awareness and sensitivity to domestic violence;
3. Providing training to services tasked with counteracting family violence;
4. Actions adopted with respect to ensuring protection and providing support to individuals affected by violence through the activities of specialized support centres for victims of domestic violence;
5. Influencing the perpetrators of domestic violence through correctional and educational programmes.

The actions in question are of an interdisciplinary nature and are performed at the central administrative level as well as at all levels of local government.

The multiannual monitoring of the phenomenon of domestic violence as well as the evaluation of the manner of implementation of tasks provided for under the provisions of the act have urged the government to take the initiative to introduce amendments to the act on counteracting family violence dated July 29, 2005, *the Family and Guardianship Code* and the *Code of Criminal Procedure*. The changes introduced were intended to establish a system facilitating the more efficient prevention of domestic violence. Works on the amendment of the acts referred to above were carried out in cooperation with non-governmental organizations dedicated to counteracting family violence, allowing for solutions which ensure a more efficient protection of victims of domestic violence (including women) to be developed. The act *amending the act on counteracting family violence and certain other acts* dated June 10, 2010 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 125, item 842), which entered into force after the end of the reporting period, has introduced the following changes:

- a new preventive measure in the form of an order to abandon premises occupied jointly with the victim in cases where there are reasons to believe that the accused may once again resort to violence against the victim;
- a new punitive measure in the form of an order to abandon premises occupied jointly with the victim and a barring order (prohibiting the accused from approaching the victim);
- new probation measures in the form of a barring order (prohibiting the accused from approaching the victim);
- option to obligate the perpetrator to participate in correctional and educational programmes without the need to obtain the perpetrator's consent;

- an obligatory premise for carrying out a conditionally suspended sentence and for revocation of a conditional early release for reoffending perpetrators of domestic violence;
- a procedure performed with the participation of a guardian ad litem, pertaining to the application to the court for the execution of a conditionally suspended prison sentence;
- option to apply, in the course of civil proceedings, for separation of the perpetrator from the victim;
- a procedure performed with the participation of a social worker who has been authorized to remove the child from the family in cases where the life or limb of the child is at risk due to the acts of violence. The social worker shall be under an obligation to notify the family court of such fact within 24 hours; the court shall then decide on the fate of the child in question.
- the possibility of performing a free medical examination for the purposes of determining the causes of bodily harm and the type of such bodily harm, as well as of receiving - free of charge - a medical certificate which may subsequently be admitted as evidence in the course of proceedings before the court. Until recently, the courts have relied exclusively on the forensic medical examination performed by the court physician; such examination was only available free of charge when performed at the request of the court or the prosecutor.
- prohibition on the use of corporal punishment by persons exercising parental authority, guardianship or custody of a minor.

The scope of actions aimed at individuals affected by domestic violence has been extended to include professional advice and support with respect to finding a place to stay in cases where the victim does not have a legal interest in the property occupied jointly with the perpetrator. Furthermore, the Attorney General shall now be under an obligation to prepare and publish - at least once every two years - guidelines pertaining to the rules of conduct for the general organizational units of the prosecution service with respect to the prevention of family violence.

Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (Istanbul Convention)

In December 2012 Poland signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Working towards the ratification of the Istanbul convention is one of the actions identified in the National Action Plan for Equal Treatment. The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, after completing a comprehensive analysis and legal assessment, has prepared a draft bill of ratification, which pending approval of the Council of Ministers, will be presented to the Parliament. Though some gaps in Polish legal systems have been identified significant amendments were already made to the Polish Penal Code, resulting in introducing *ex officio* proceedings in all cases of sexual violence. Additionally, in 2013 the Police introduced a risk assessment procedure, aimed at improving their response in domestic violence cases, which corresponds with standards set forth by the Convention.

Activities of the Police in the area of counteracting domestic violence and gender-based violence.

In November 2012, the basic Police training programme has been supplemented to include issues related to domestic violence. A questionnaire for a survey intended to examine the attitudes of police officers commencing their basic training towards the issue of domestic violence has also been developed.

In 2013, the contents of managerial courses (i.e. the specialist course for the management of Police organizational units as well as the human resources training course for medium-level managerial staff) have also been updated to include issues pertaining to family violence.

The Police has also implemented a programme for counteracting violence in families of police officers known as “*MOC – tak, PRZEMOC – nie!*” (*use your POWER, but never OVERPOWER*). On the basis of the materials contained in the programme, a draft guidebook for police officers has been prepared, intended for those police officers who intervene in cases of domestic violence in families of other police officers; this draft guidebook shall be forwarded for use within the framework of local professional skill development programmes organised in individual Police organizational units. The information contained in the guidebook referred to above pertains to the following issues:

- receiving notifications on acts of violence - duties and principles of conduct of police officers;
- first contact - analysing the situation;
- the nature of domestic violence in families of police officers;
- the legal assessment of the phenomenon of domestic violence;
- examples of use of violence by police officers vis-à-vis family members and of the response of other police officers to such incidents.

On January 25, 2013 at the Katowice Police Academy and on January 29, 2013 at the Słupsk Police Academy, training courses for Province Police Commanders/the Warsaw Metropolitan Police Commander and for deputy police commanders for prevention were held within the framework of the programme referred to above.

On January 25, 2013, a letter was sent to Province Police Commanders/the Warsaw Metropolitan Police Commander as well as to Police academy commanders, accompanied by the *Extract from the programme for counteracting domestic violence in families of police officers* (“*MOC - tak, PRZEMOC - nie!*”), containing suggestions and principles of conduct in cases where a police officer is the perpetrator or victim of domestic violence. The extract referred to above has superseded the guidelines initially earmarked for implementation within the framework of the programme.

On June 25-26, 2013 in Warsaw, within the framework of the “*MOC – tak, PRZEMOC – nie!*” programme, a training session has taken place, organised by the *Blue Line* Nationwide Emergency Service for Victims of Domestic Violence; 17 Police psychologists from the Province Police Headquarters and the Warsaw Metropolitan Police Headquarters have participated in the programme, along with 4 psychologists from Police academies, 3

psychologists from the Police Psychology Department of the Office of the Police Commander in Chief and the representatives of the Preventive Measures Department of the Office for Prevention and Road Traffic of the National Police Headquarters.

On July 9, 2013, a working meeting organised by the Preventive Measures Department of the Office for Prevention and Road Traffic of the National Police Headquarters was held, attended by the representatives of the Police Psychology Department of the Office of the Police Commander in Chief as well as by representatives of Police psychologists from the Province Police Headquarters in Łódź, Katowice, Białystok and Radom and by the *Blue Cards* procedure coordinators from the Province Police Headquarters in Katowice, Łódź and Białystok. The aim of the meeting was to:

1. Develop unified principles for the organization of trainings for Police managerial staff within the framework of the implementation of the “*MOC - tak, PRZEMOC – nie*” programme.
2. Specify the principles for the conducting of training sessions for police officers from the patrol and intervention units, community support units and other units which intervene in cases of domestic violence in families of police officers.
3. Compile the experiences and suggestions pertaining to the implementation of the programme.

It is worth noting that works are currently underway at the Preventive Measures Department of the Office for Prevention and Road Traffic of the National Police Headquarters which are aimed at developing the principles for conducting training sessions forming part local professional skill development programmes for police officers operating in patrol and intervention units, community support units and other units which intervene in cases of domestic violence in families of police officers.

The *Blue Line* Nationwide Emergency Service for Victims of Domestic Violence, in cooperation with the Preventive Measures Department of the Office for Prevention and Road Traffic of the National Police Headquarters, has prepared an application for the PL 14 Programme (*Counteracting domestic violence and gender-based violence*). The project is intended to supplement the process of the implementation of the “*MOC-tak, PRZEMOC-nie!*” programme. The project is to involve the training of high- and mid-level Police managerial staff, including the heads of prevention departments at the Province Police Headquarters and the Warsaw Metropolitan Police Headquarters (17 individuals), as well as municipal, district and regional commanders (338 individuals) - i.e. 355 individuals in total. Between May and June 2013, tools for the assessment of the risk to life or limb due to domestic violence as well as operational procedures for police officers in domestic violence cases have been developed. The *Dzieci Nikzyje* (*Nobody's Children*) Foundation and the *Blue Line* Nationwide Emergency Service for Victims of Domestic Violence have also made their contributions in the process of the development of the aforementioned tools and procedures; the process was also based on the experience gained in the course implementation of the projects referred to above. As a result, two distinct tools have been developed: Part A - violence against adults, and part B - violence against children. Each of these tools comprises a risk assessment questionnaire and a procedure to be followed by police officers. The risk assessment questionnaire (part A and B) describes 13 factors of risk to life and limb, framed as questions. The number of positive answers given is intended to make it easier for the

officer at the scene of domestic violence to take adequate actions (e.g. making an arrest of an individual suspected of violent conduct). In addition, a *Practical Police Guidebook* has also been developed. *Assessment of risks related to individual incidents of domestic violence*

The aim of the tools for the assessment of risk to life and limb in connection with domestic violence is to increase the efficiency of the actions adopted by intervening police officers with respect to perpetrators of domestic violence as well as ensuring the safety of individuals affected by domestic violence by reducing the risks to life and limb of such individuals.

It needs to be emphasized that in December 2013 all District/Municipal/Regional Police Departments as well as prevention departments (within the police garrisons which perform interventions in cases of family violence) have been issued with Mp-92 (questionnaire for the assessment of risk to life and limb of adults in connection with domestic violence) and Mp-93 (questionnaire for the assessment of risk to life and limb of children in connection with domestic violence) forms.

In 2013 a focus group survey was carried out, encompassing 17 police officers from patrol and intervention squads and community support squads of the Warsaw Metropolitan Police Headquarters and the Province Police Headquarters in Gorzów Wielkopolski. The surveys were carried out by the *Dzieci Niczyje* Foundation. The focus group surveys were used for the purposes of implementation by the Police of tools for the assessment of risks to life and limb in connection with domestic violence (from January 1, 2014 onwards). The next stage of preparations for the implementation of the risk assessment tools has been the pilot programme at the Lubusz police garrison. Within the framework of the pilot programme in August 2013, cascade training courses were organised for police officers from patrol and intervention squads and community support squads. In September 2013, within the area of the Lubusz garrison, police officers took advantage of the tools for the assessment of risks to life and limb in connection with domestic violence in the course of interventions which involved incidents of family violence. During this period, the Lubuskie Province Governor has issued recommendations for heads of communes, mayors and county governors which stated that, during the period of pilot implementation of the tools in question, social workers of the applicable social welfare centres were to remain on 24-hour standby to perform interventions related to family violence and that the directors of district family support centres were to ensure the 24-hour availability of information on the location where the given child was to be placed as well as the availability of specialist advice, including, in particular, psychologists or pedagogues.

In the course of the pilot programme, social workers in many communes have performed actions aimed at families affected by violence on the first business day following an intervention by the Police. Social workers were to take actions with respect to families affected by violence only in cases where the Police has apprehended an individual suspected of applying domestic violence and where the suspected victim of domestic violence consented to establishing contact with a social worker.

The implementation of the tool in question on a nationwide scale has been effected by way of cascade training courses organised in individual Police garrisons. The *Blue Line* Association Against Violence and representatives of the National Police Headquarters have organised trainings

for Police officers aspiring to the role of leaders. The series of 42 training courses came to an end on December 9, 2013, with a total of 850 Police officers participating in the programme. Subsequently, the leaders would conduct training courses at the given District/Municipal/Regional Police Headquarters. As a result, a total of approximately 35 000 police officers tasked with the performance of duties related to domestic violence have participated in the training programme. In the course of the training programme, each Police officer has received tools for the assessment of risks to life and limb in connection with domestic violence (parts A and B) as well as the *Practical Police Guidebook. Assessment of risks related to individual incidents of domestic violence*.

Particular emphasis needs to be placed on the activities of the Police performed within individual garrisons. The cooperation of the Province Police Headquarters in Gorzów Wielkopolski with the Province Office may serve as an example; as a result of this cooperation, the project designated as *Development and enhancement of forms and methods of counteracting domestic violence in the Lubuskie Province* has been developed; an application for co-financing of this project within the framework of the *Razem Bezpieczniej (Safer Together)* Programme for the Reduction of Criminal and Anti-social Activities has also been filed. The project in question is scheduled for implementation in the second half of 2014 and is intended to cover, inter alia, the establishment of district-wide forums for closer cooperation between local services and institutions operating in the area of counteracting domestic violence, interdisciplinary training courses, pre-emptive actions aimed at students of post-secondary schools as well as the provision of specialist advice to families at risk of domestic violence.

Public consultations on counteracting violence against women

Between May 20 and October 21, 2013, a total of 16 provincial conferences were held under the common title “National and regional policies for counteracting family violence and gender-based violence”. The conferences were co-organised by the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Province Offices.

The aim of the conferences was to discuss issues related to the prevention and combating of family violence and violence against women in a professional environment. During each conference, the significance of gender stereotyping and the role of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence were discussed, as were the practical challenges and solutions for communal interdisciplinary teams.

Furthermore, the actions performed for the purposes of counteracting domestic violence by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy were presented, the actions in question pertaining to the following areas: the draft National Programme for Counteracting Family Violence for years 2014-2020, the “Support for Local Government Units in the Establishment of a System for the Prevention of Family Violence” programme, the “Prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence” programme implemented within the framework of the 2009-2013 financial perspective and co-financed using the funds derived from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (NFM), systemic projects implemented within the framework of funds provided by the European Social Fund.

The conferences referred to above were the most extensive public consultations pertaining to anti-violence state policies to date. Each conference has from 160 to 400 participants, which means that, in total, a few thousand specialists have participated in the programme, representing such fields as social welfare, education, the prosecution service, the judicial system, the health service, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations.

The summary of conclusions of all conferences has been published in a document entitled “Final report on 16 provincial regional conferences: The national and regional policies for counteracting family violence and gender-based violence”. The report has been sent to all provinces and has, in addition, been published on the website of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment.

Legislative changes in the field of equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market.

Since Poland has acceded to the European Union in 2004, the regulatory environment has seen a marked improvement - the Labour Code is amended on an ongoing basis, in accordance with EU Directives. In 2007 the *act on telework* entered into force, governing flexible forms of employment. The so-called family policy package is being implemented on an ongoing basis; it is intended to improve the situation of women who wish to reconcile motherhood with their professional career.

Recent amendments to the Labour Code:

Since the beginning of 2007, two amendments to the Labour Code have been made, taking into account the implementation of policies for equal treatment and prevention of gender-based discrimination, i.e. the *act amending the Labour Code* dated November 21, 2008 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 223, item 1460) as well as the *act amending the Labour Code and certain other acts* dated December 6, 2008 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 237, item 1154). The first of the aforementioned acts has introduced changes to the provisions of the Labour Code pertaining, inter alia, to the following issues:

- equal treatment in employment,
- legal situation of employees returning to work following the end of maternity leave.

The amended provisions of the Labour Code entered into force on January 18, 2009.

The second of the aforementioned acts has introduced changes to the provisions of the Labour Code pertaining to, inter alia, the following issues:

- maternity leave,
- leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave,
- additional rights for parents (paternity leave),
- the protection of the employment relationship of employees entitled to a childcare leave who take advantage of reduced working time.

The amended provisions of the Labour Code entered into force on January 1, 2009.

The changes related to the equal treatment principle introduced to the Labour Code involve, on one hand, making certain provisions more detailed and precise (this applies, in particular, to the definition of indirect discrimination and the manifestations thereof as well as the definition of sexual harassment (article 18 3a § 4, 5 and 6 of the Labour Code), as well as providing a more precise definition of examples of situations where the principle of equal treatment in employment is not violated (article 18 3b § 2 of the Labour Code); on the other hand, the changes in question also involve the introduction of new regulations intended to increase the standard of protection of employees in the area of equal treatment in employment. The new regulations in question pertain, in particular, to the following issues:

- introduction of a prohibition on taking any adverse action against employees who submit to harassment or sexual harassment or who makes attempts to oppose harassment or sexual harassment (art. 18 3a § 7 of the Labour Code),
- according significantly more extensive protection to employees who take advantage of the rights stemming from the fact of violation of the principle of equal treatment in employment (art. 18 3e § 1 of the Labour Code); an employee who takes advantage of such rights may not only never be discharged from employment for that reason, but may also never be subject to less favourable treatment in the course of his employment and no adverse action may ever be taken against the employee in question due to the reasons stated above,
- according protection to employees who provide support to other employees taking advantage of the rights stemming from the fact of violation of the principle of equal treatment in employment (art. 18 3e § 2 of the Labour Code); the scope of this protection is equivalent to the protection accorded to employees taking advantage of the rights stemming from the fact of violation of the principle of equal treatment in employment. Changes related to the legal situation of employees returning to work following maternity leave. The new article 183 § 2 of the Labour Code provides that employees returning from maternity leave or leave granted on conditions equivalent to those of a maternity leave shall benefit from a guarantee of admission to their previous position or, if not practicable, to an equivalent-level position or another position which corresponds to the professional qualifications of the employee, with a salary at a level which the employee in question would have received had he or she not taken advantage of the leave. Pursuant to the provisions referred to above, the employer is under an obligation to admit such employee to work, subject to the terms and conditions specified above; failure to comply with this obligation shall, according to art. 281.5 of the Labour Code, constitute a violation of employee rights. Changes pertaining to maternity leave and leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave

From January 1, 2009, the maternity leave entitlement has been extended and made dependent upon the number of children born during a single birth:

- 20 weeks where a single child is born;
- 31 weeks where two children are born during a single birth;
- 33 weeks where three children are born during a single birth;
- 35 weeks where four children are born during a single birth;
- 37 weeks where five children are born during a single birth;

Part of the maternity leave granted to the father during the mother's stay in hospital

From January 1, 2009, an employee who is also a father caring for a child shall - apart from cases specified in article 180 § 5 and 7 of the Labour Code - be entitled to take advantage of a part of the maternity leave in circumstances referred to in article 180 § 61 of the Labour Code, provided that the following conditions are jointly satisfied:

- the mother of the child has taken 8 weeks of maternity leave following childbirth,
- the mother, who is entitled to a maternity leave, is unable to provide the child with care in person due to her health condition and the fact that she remains in hospital.

In such cases, the maternity leave of the mother is interrupted for the period during which the father who takes over parental duties takes advantage of such leave. The part of the maternity leave used by the male employee (the father) may not exceed the period during which the mother entitled to a maternity leave needs to stay in hospital due to her health condition which prevents her from performing her parental duties in person. The total period of maternity leave used by the female employee (the mother) and the male employee (the father who takes over parental duties) may not exceed the period laid down in article 180 § 1 of the Labour Code (the new article 180 § 61 – 63 of the Labour Code).

Notwithstanding the above, during the maternity leave the mother (or the father) shall be entitled to a maternity allowance. The amount of the said allowance depends on whether (and if so, when) an application for additional maternity leave and parental leave directly after the initial maternity leave has been submitted. Where the application referred to above is submitted no later than within 14 days following childbirth - the mother shall be entitled to an allowance in the amount of 80% of her base pay throughout the entire period during which she takes advantage of the leaves in question (in cases where a single child is born, the period in question shall be 52 weeks).

In cases where the decision on taking advantage of the leaves referred to above is taken at a later stage, the mother shall be entitled to 100% of the allowance basis during maternity leave and additional maternity leave as well as to 60% of the allowance basis during parental leave. Following the lapse of the period of the leaves referred to above, the employer shall admit the employee back to work on the original position or, where not practicable, on an equivalent-level position or another position which corresponds to the professional qualifications of the employee, with a salary at a level which the employee in question would have received had he or she not taken advantage of the leave.

Furthermore, both the mother and the father shall also be entitled to a childcare leave of up to 36 months per single child for as long as the child is less than 5 years old.

Maternity allowance for the period equivalent to the period of parental leave

Right to receive allowance

From June 17, 2013 onwards, the maternity allowance shall also be available throughout the period designated under the provisions of the Labour Code as the period of parental leave. On this basis, the maternity allowance for the period of parental leave shall be available both in connection with childbirth and in connection with taking over the guardianship of a child aged 7 or less (or, in the case of a child with respect to whom a decision has been adopted on deferring

compulsory school attendance - a child aged 10 or less) and in connection with the application to a guardianship court for the commencement of the proceedings for the adoption of such child, or in connection with taking over the guardianship of a child by way of placement in a foster family, with the exception of a professional foster family.

In order to become entitled to the right to receive maternity allowance for the period designated as the period of parental leave, one must first exhaust the maternity leave for the period specified under the provisions of the Labour Code as the period of the additional maternity leave or additional leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave, to the full extent applicable from June 17, 2013, i.e. for a period of 6, 8 or 3 weeks respectively.

Payment period

In accordance with the new regulations, the maternity leave entitlement for the period corresponding to the period of parental leave amounts to 26 weeks and may be used either in its entirety or in no more than three directly consecutive parts, each of which may not be shorter than 8 weeks and must constitute a multiple of a week. The parental leave entitlement shall not be dependent upon the number of children born during a single birth (or of foster children accepted into the household at one time). Both parents shall have the right to take advantage of the maternity allowance for the period of parental leave, provided that the aggregate parental leave and allowance entitlement with respect to both parents may not exceed 26 weeks.

Impact of performing work during the period of parental leave on allowance

As a result of the changes introduced, the mother or father taking advantage of the parental leave may simultaneously perform work for the employer who has granted them the leave in question, provided that they may not perform the work in question for a period exceeding one half of their full working time. In such case, the amount of maternity allowance shall be reduced pro rata to the time of work performed by the father or mother when on parental leave. This principle shall apply exclusively to employees and does not apply to other insured who do not have the status of employees.

Additional maternity leave

From January 1, 2010 onwards, both the female employee and the male employee (father performing parental duties) have the right to take advantage of the additional maternity leave (article 182 § 1 and 182 § 2 of the Labour Code). This additional leave is optional, unlike the aforementioned standard maternity leave. The male employee - father performing parental duties - shall be entitled to an additional leave in the following cases:

- where he takes advantage of a portion of the maternity leave - in cases where the female employee disclaims the remainder of her leave after 14 weeks on maternity leave (in accordance with article 180 § 5 of the Labour Code),

- where he does not take advantage of a portion of the maternity leave - in cases where the female employee takes advantage of the entire maternity leave; in such case, the father performing parental duties shall, in addition, specify in his application the date on which the mother's maternity leave comes to an end. Both parents may not take advantage of the additional maternity leave at the same time (article 189 § 1 of the Labour Code).

Additional maternity leave entitlement has been increased in stages:

In 2010 and 2011:

- to 2 weeks where a single child was born;
- to 3 weeks where two and more children were born during a single birth;

In 2012 and 2013:

- to 4 weeks where a single child was born;
- to 6 weeks where two and more children were born during a single birth;

From 1 January 2014:

- to 6 weeks where a single child is born;
- to 8 weeks where two and more children are born during a single birth;

Additional maternity leave is granted in accordance with the rules laid down in article 182 § 1, § 2-3 and § 6 of the Labour Code. Additional maternity leave shall be granted:

- directly following the end of maternity leave,
- for a single period only (the application may only be submitted once),
- for one or multiple weeks (one week corresponds to 7 calendar days),
- at a written request of the female employee or male employee (father performing parental duties) submitted within the period of at least 7 days prior to the intended commencement of the additional leave; the employer shall be under an obligation to take such an application into account.

As a result of the amendments introduced, article 182 § 1 § 3 and 4 of the Labour Code now provides for an option to take advantage of an additional maternity leave while simultaneously performing work for the employer who granted the leave in question, provided that the work in question is not performed for a period longer than half of the full working time. In such case, the additional maternity leave shall be granted for the remaining portion of the daily working time. The commencement of work shall take place on the basis of a written application of the given female or male employee, submitted within the period of at least 7 days prior to the intended commencement of the work in question; in the application, the employee shall specify the intended working time and the period during which he or she intends to combine the additional maternity leave with the performance of work. The employer shall be under an obligation to take the application referred to above into account. During the period of additional maternity leave, the employment relationship of the given female or male employee shall be subject to extended protection against termination and dismissal (article 182 § 1 § 5 in conjunction with article 177 of the Labour Code). Directly after the additional maternity leave comes to an end, female employees shall have the right to take advantage of a holiday leave; in such case, the employer shall be under an obligation to grant such a leave at a date specified by the employee in question (article 163 § 3 of the Labour Code).

The legislative changes pertaining to maternity leaves referred to above have subsequently continued in the form of an act which entered into force on June 17, 2013 and which extended the

period of maternity leave to one year and which also introduced a portion of the maternity leave designed to be available for both parents, i.e. the parental leave.

Leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave

A leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave shall be available to those employees who have taken over the guardianship of a child and who have applied to a guardianship court for the commencement of the proceedings for the adoption of such child, or who have taken over the guardianship of a child as a foster family, with the exception of a professional foster family unrelated to the child, provided that the child is less than 7 years old or, in the case of a child with respect to whom a decision has been adopted on deferring compulsory school attendance - provided that the child is less than 10 years old.

From January 2009 onwards, the entitlement to the leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave has been extended and made dependent upon the number of children taken under guardianship (provided that the applicable age requirements are complied with); the current entitlement to the leave referred to above amounts to:

- 20 weeks in cases where a single child is taken under guardianship,
- 31 weeks in cases where two children are taken under guardianship at the same time,
- 33 weeks in cases where three children are taken under guardianship at the same time,
- 35 weeks in cases where four children are taken under guardianship at the same time,
- 37 weeks in cases where five children are taken under guardianship at the same time,

In addition, the entitlement to a leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave in cases where the employee referred to above takes over the guardianship of a child below the age of 7 (or, in the case of a child with respect to whom a decision has been adopted on deferring compulsory school attendance, below the age of 10) has also been extended - from 8 to 9 weeks.

Additional leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave

From January 1, 2010, an employee may also take advantage of an additional leave granted on conditions equivalent to a maternity leave, granted at the request of the employee (article 183 § 3 of the Labour Code). The leave in question shall be granted subject to the same terms and conditions as the additional maternity leave (article 183 § 4 in conjunction with article 182 § 1, § 2-5 of the Labour Code). The entitlement to the leave in question has been extended in stages;

In 2010 and 2011:

- increased to 2 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of one child,
- increased to 3 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of two or more children,
- 1 week - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of an older child (less than 7 years old);

In 2012 and 2013:

- increased to 4 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of one child,
- increased to 6 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of two or more children,

- increased to 2 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of an older child (less than 7 years old);

From 1 January 2014:

- increased to 6 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of one child,

- increased to 8 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of two or more children,

- increased to 3 weeks - for employees who have taken over the guardianship of an older child (less than 7 years old);

Changes pertaining to paternity leave

From January 1, 2010 onwards, male employees (fathers performing parental duties) have the right to take advantage of a paternity leave (article 182 § 3 of the Labour Code and article 14 of the amending act). The paternity leave is optional in nature and may not be transferred to any other individuals. The paternity leave shall be available to a father of a child, provided that the child is less than 12 months old. The paternity leave shall be granted at a written request submitted within the period of at least 7 days prior to the intended commencement of the leave. The employer shall be under an obligation to take the application referred to above into account. The paternity leave may also be taken advantage of by an employee during the period in which the child's mother takes advantage, for example, of a maternity leave or an additional maternity leave. The employer shall be entitled to a maternity allowance for the period of the paternity leave (article 29.5a of the act *on pecuniary benefits in cases of sickness and maternity* dated June 25, 1999 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2005, no. 31, item 267, as amended). During the period of paternity leave, the employer may not dismiss the employee in question due to the prohibition on dismissal and termination of the employment relationship during that time, as in the case of maternity leave (article 182 § 3 in conjunction with article 177 of the Labour Code). In cases where the given employee shall be unable to take a holiday leave or where the employee in question goes on a holiday leave, the commencement of a paternity leave shall result, respectively, in the non-commencement of a holiday leave or the interruption thereof and the postponement of such leave until a later period (article 182 § 3 in conjunction with article 165.4 and article 166.4 of the Labour Code). Furthermore, the employer shall be under an obligation to grant the father of the child a holiday leave directly following the end of the paternity leave (article 182 § 3 in conjunction with article 163 § 3 of the Labour Code).

The entitlement to paternity leave has been extended in stages:

- in 2010 and 2011 - 1 week,

- from January 1, 2012 - 2 weeks.

So far, very few fathers have taken advantage of their rights in this regard. The ignorance of the law and the fear of dismissal from job or loss of the position held within the organization are the main causes of the decision of employees not to take advantage of paternity leaves. Provisions pertaining to paternity leaves are not the only relevant amendment of the Labour Code pertaining to parenthood.

Changes pertaining to employees entitled to childcare leave

The amendment of the Labour Code has also resulted in an extension of the scope of protection of the employment relationship against termination and dismissal for the period during which the employee entitled to a childcare leave is taking advantage of the reduced working time pursuant to article 186 § 7 of the Labour Code (article 186 § 8 of the Labour Code). From January 1, 2009, the employer may not dismiss an employee or terminate the employment contract within the period from the day on which the employee entitled to a childcare leave submits an application for the reduction of working time until the day on which the working time reduction ceases to apply, provided that the period in question may not exceed 12 months in total. The termination of the employment contract by the employer during that period shall only be permitted in the event of bankruptcy or liquidation of the employer as well as in cases where circumstances arise which allow the employment contract to be terminated without notice due to the fault of the employee. The scope of protection of the employment relationship is therefore equivalent to the scope of protection accorded in case of childcare leave, although the period of protection is shorter.

On July 13, 2013, the act *amending the act on the provision of care to children below the age of 3 and certain other acts* dated May 10, 2013 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] item 747), which has amended the act *on the provision of care to children below the age of 3* dated February 4, 2011 (consolidated text: Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] item 1457, as amended), entered into force. The amendment in question has been the result of the analysis of the process of implementation of the relevant act as well as the submissions made by non-governmental organizations. The aim of the amendment is the further development of the institution of the provision of care to young children. The most significant changes introduced by the act *amending the act on the provision of care to children below the age of 3 and certain other acts* are as follows:

1. reducing the amount of necessary own contribution of the commune from 50% to 20% of the costs of implementation of the given task when applying for state budget financing for the establishment and functioning of care institutions,
2. extending the group of eligible entities which may apply for state budget financing for the establishment and functioning of care institutions through the addition of non-public entities (i.e. not only communes, but also legal persons, organizational entities without legal personality as well as natural persons,
3. extending the group of entities authorized to employ day caretakers through the addition of legal persons and organizational entities without legal personality,
4. allowing care institutions for children below the age of 3 to organise joint administrative, financial and organizational facilities with schools and other educational establishments,
5. allowing individuals pursuing agricultural activities to employ babysitters for whom social security and health insurance contributions are paid from the state budget,
6. delegation for the purposes of compiling the sanitary requirements pertaining to nurseries and children's clubs and to include all such requirements in a single regulation,
7. establishing the possibility for entities which organise childcare-related activities to register a nursery or children's club online.

From 2011 onwards, pursuant to article 62 of the *act on provision of care services to children below the age of 3* dated February 4, 2011 (consolidated text: Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2013, item 1457), the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has been developing and

implementing the *Ministerial programme for the development of care institutions for children aged less than 3 - "MALUCH" ("toddler")*. Within the framework of the competitions held so far, co-financing in the form of designated subsidies from budget funds has been awarded with respect to activities for the development and maintenance of infrastructure for the provision of care to children aged less than 3, i.e. nurseries, children's clubs and day caretakers. In 2013, a total amount of PLN 101 million was allocated for the co-financing of the expenditure of the local governments on commune level as well as non-public entities related to the establishment and maintenance of facilities dedicated to the provision of care to children below the age of 3, including the establishment and functioning of nurseries, children's clubs and day caretakers (including actions performed within the framework of the "Maluch" programme). An amount of PLN 101 million has also been earmarked for the above objective for year 2014.

In 2013 there was a total of 1412 active institutions devoted to the provision of care to young children (1117 nurseries, 203 children's clubs and 92 day caretakers), whereas at the end of 2010 there was a mere 511 care institutions for children below the age of 3 (nurseries and nursery departments).

The act *on the provision of care to children below the age of 3* dated February 4, 2011 has made it possible to legally employ babysitters (with whom appropriate activation agreements are concluded), for whom retirement, disability and accident insurance as well as health insurance contributions have been paid from the state budget from October 1, 2011. As at November 15, 2013, over 9 thousand babysitters have been registered for social security.

The act amending the act on promotion of employment and labour market institutions and certain other acts:

As a result of the media coverage of an incident involving a woman who has been deprived of the status of an unemployed person due to pregnancy and sick leave, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment has requested the chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Social Policy and Family on April 30, 2010, to take actions, at the initiative of the Committee, aimed at the urgent amendment of the provisions of the act on the promotion of employment and labour market institutions dated April 20, 2004 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2008, no. 69, item 415, as amended). The amendment proposed by the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment governed the issues of the status of unemployed individuals at a time of pregnancy or postnatal period, which have hitherto been resolved by way of individual interpretation and have led to a great degree of uncertainty. In December 2010, the Sejm passed the amendment of the act on the promotion of employment and labour market institutions (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 257, item 1725, as amended). According to the amendment, pregnant women shall not be deprived of the unemployed status even in cases where the period of unfitness for work related to pregnancy and childbirth exceeds 90 days. Neither shall women be deprived of the unemployed status in the event of illness which lasts for an uninterrupted period of 90 days and which results from childbirth-related complications, within 30 days following childbirth.

- e) What mechanisms are in place for regular dialogue between Government and civil society? If mechanisms are in place, briefly describe them.

In the reporting period, the Government Plenipotentiary for the Equal Status of Women and Men cooperated with non-governmental organisations. In 2002, the Plenipotentiary established the Programme and Advisory Board: an advisory body which acted as a permanent consultative and opinion-forming working team. Furthermore, the Council was supposed to ensure mutual communication between the Plenipotentiary and non-governmental organisations in the scope of ad-hoc projects and actions which were of substantial importance and on which the Plenipotentiary was working under the urgent procedure. Cooperation also consisted in granting financial support to activities undertaken by organisations with a view to achieve the gender equality. Competitions for funding projects carried out by non-governmental organisations, including women's organisations, have been organised since 2002. Following the liquidation of the post of Government Plenipotentiary for the Equal Status of Women and Men, the competencies related to organising competitions for non-governmental organisations were transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in November 2005. Since 2006, the Ministry has been organising an annual "Competition for the Organisation of NGO Initiatives". Within the funds earmarked for grants, the organisations undertook actions aimed at counteracting domestic violence, increasing the participation of fathers in bringing up children, supporting local youth communities and senior citizens, promoting gender equality, increasing the participation of women in public life and counteracting social exclusion and human trafficking. During the *2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All* the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy appointed an Advisory Committee composed of members of non-governmental organisations active in the field of counteracting discrimination. Committee members were nominated by the Minister and could provide him with their opinions and recommendations. The Committee was divided into working groups. Each group dealt with a different form of discrimination, including gender discrimination.

Non-governmental organisations may also apply for support under Government Operational Programme Civic Initiatives Fund financed from the state budget. Support for eradicating all forms of discrimination against women may be provided in numerous forms such as activating women in public life and providing equal opportunities to groups that are at particular risk of discrimination and exclusion.

Non-governmental organisations could also apply for financial aid under the European Social Fund to implement projects under the 2004-2006 Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development. Currently, they may benefit from the 2007-2013 Operational Programme Human Capital.

Moreover, since it was established in 2008, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment has actively cooperated with women's organisations and associations in implementing, within his remit, actions aimed at counteracting discrimination. This cooperation consisted mainly in organising conferences, meetings, seminars, competitions and other information and promotional activities as well as cooperation within the Problem Teams appointed by the Plenipotentiary, including the Team for Counteracting Discrimination against Women which gathered representatives of public administration and ca. 40 women's organisations, as well as the Team for Counteracting Discrimination against Fathers.

Since 2011 the cooperation has been held as part of Wednesday meetings with non-governmental organizations in the field of counteracting discrimination based on gender: Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment was inviting NGO representatives to discuss various issues concerning the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, such as gender based violence, gender pay gap or women in decision making.

Moreover between 2009-2013 the Polish Congress of Women was taking place each year. The Congress of Women was founded in June 2009 as a social movement aimed at social and political activation of women in Poland. The point of departure were actions accompanying the organisation of the 1st Congress of Women, i.e. a convention of over 4 thousand women from all over the country who discussed women's contribution to the history of the last 20 years in Poland. The Congress concluded with the drafting of a number of demands, one of the most significant of which was the introduction of gender quotas on electoral lists. Congress participants actively sought to fulfil this demand as well as to introduce the subject of gender quotas to public debate. A bill on gender quotas was drafted and put forward to the Sejm as a citizens' bill and adopted in 2011. 3rd European Congress of Women was organised in 2011 during the Polish Presidency of the EU Council with a Round Table for ministers in charge of gender equality in European Union: topics of discussion were: reconciliation of work and family life, gender pay gap and scheduled for 9 of May 2014: women on boards.

Currently, the Congress of Women is a supra-political initiative which brings together individual persons, non-governmental organisations, representatives of the world of business, politics, science, art or journalism, trade unions, employer unions and many others. The Congress also includes a Shadow Cabinet which meets with the Prime Minister and Ministers in order to discuss current actions of the government, thus exerting a real influence on its policy. Next 6 th Congress of Women is scheduled for 9 and 10 of May 2014.

In 2009-2010, 16 regional conferences entitled "*It's time for active and resourceful women*" were organised to promote the activation of women under "*The Social and Economic Activation of Women at the Local and Regional Level*" project implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and co-financed from European Union funds under the Operational Programme Human Capital. Since 2012 a number of Regional Congresses of Women have been held with participation of many government's representatives.

Do non-governmental organizations, including civil society organizations, women's organizations, academia, faith-based organizations, the private sector and other actors participate formally in the mechanisms established to monitor and implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

Answer to this question as above.

- f) What main in-country, bilateral, sub-regional and/or regional cooperation is the country engaged in to support sharing of knowledge and experiences in the monitoring and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

Activities of the Republic of Poland in the United Nations, the European Union, OECD and the Council of Europe

The Republic of Poland pursues an active policy in the field of equality, supporting the aspirations of women towards the full participation in public life as well as the elimination of domestic violence, mutilation practices and the so-called forced marriages. The Republic of Poland supports resolutions pertaining to the said issues tabled during the proceedings of the UN Human Rights Council as well as other international organizations and participates actively in discussions held within the European Union.

In 2013, in Geneva, Poland has joined the group of countries involved in the development of a Human Rights Council resolution dedicated to forced marriages (*Strengthening efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage: challenges, achievements, best practices and implementation gaps*). The Republic of Poland has also participated in the joint statement by an interregional group of countries during a high-level panel dedicated to good practices in the process of combating the phenomenon of female genital mutilation. Poland has issued a statement in the course of debate pertaining to the role of civic society organizations in promoting the concept of gender mainstreaming in the context of the proceedings of the Human Rights Council.

During the 68th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, Poland has joined the initiative launched by the United Kingdom and signed, along with a number of other countries, the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflicts. The Declaration, which forms part of a wider campaign pertaining to the elimination of sexual violence, implemented within the framework of the *Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative* launched by William Hague, the UK Foreign Secretary, in May 2012, contains a number of commitments intended to combat the culture of impunity, raise social awareness and ensure more efficient support for victims. By joining this initiative, the Republic of Poland has undertaken, inter alia, to ensure adequate funds for counteracting violence against women, guarantee comprehensive support for victims, promote equality and enhance the process of gathering data pertaining to the relevant incidents as well as ensure support to organizations dedicated to the monitoring of the situation of women during armed conflicts.

Within the framework of participation in initiatives pertaining to the elimination of violence against women, in 2013 the Republic of Poland has joined the list of co-sponsors of the UN Resolution 2106, dedicated to the issue of sexual violence in armed conflicts. The Resolution has been adopted by the UN Security Council at the initiative of the United Kingdom on June 24, 2013. The Resolution defines sexual violence as an instrument of warfare which threatens long-lasting peace and security as well as sustainable development. Furthermore, the Republic of Poland has joined the group of co-sponsors of the Security Council Resolution 2122, adopted on October 18, 2013 at the initiative of Azerbaijan, pertaining to the strengthening of the role of women in the event of conflict. In accordance with the provisions of this Resolution, Poland actively supports the involvement of women at all stages of the decision-making process during crisis situations, from prevention, through mediation and negotiation, to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Poland's commitment towards promoting women's rights became apparent during the proceedings of the Third Committee in the course of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. Poland has made a statement during the general debate, presenting its position on the

issue of equality. It has actively participated in negotiations on the resolution on women in the countryside, CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration, violence against migrant women and the Norwegian initiative pertaining to women - defenders of human rights. As one of the first delegations, Poland has joined the list of co-sponsors of the resolution dedicated to the issue of forced marriages, i.e. the *Child, early and forced marriage resolution*, adopted as a part of the programme of works carried out by the Committee on children's rights.

On the fringe of this year's 58th session of the SCW, the Republic of Poland held a conference featuring Ms. Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, entitled *Combating Violence against Women – Regional Perspective*. The Republic of Poland was one of the organisers of the conference entitled *The MDGs, Post 2015 and Beijing +20 – regional perspectives: North America, Europe*. During the session, a meeting has taken place between the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and the UN Women Executive Director, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo Ngucka.

In the European Union, gender equality constitute one of the issues discussed within working groups of both the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission.

Poland is an active member of Management Board of European Institute for Gender Equality and Fundamental Rights Agency – both of them are EU technical agencies. Poland is an active member of the OECD Gender Equality in Education Employment and Entrepreneurship team.

In the Council of Europe, the Republic of Poland actively participates in the monitoring and analysis of the main problems pertaining to the issue of equality. The Republic of Poland actively participates in the works of the Gender Equality Commission, while Polish delegates to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly are also involved in the process of formulating recommendations aimed at the realization of the gender equality principle, improvement of the situation of women on the labour market, facilitating the reconciliation of family and professional life as well as counteracting harmful gender stereotyping. In recent years, the Assembly has adopted a number of reports pertaining to the issue of women's rights.

Poland in the UN Women Executive Council

The Republic of Poland attaches great importance to the works of UN Women and has been supporting this entity from the very moment of its inception (including financial support). Poland desires to share its domestic experience in the field of promoting women's rights and gender equality, hence the decision to propose its candidacy to the UN Women Executive Council for years 2014-2016. The Republic of Poland has been selected to join the Council on November 7, 2013; at the same time, a Polish representative has taken the position of vice-chairman of the Executive Council in 2014.

The Republic of Poland will strive towards an efficient use of its term of office in the UN Women Council by promoting its priorities in the area of gender equality.

- g) How, and to what extent, have the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) overall, and in particular the gender-related MDGs, facilitated or strengthened the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

Poland implemented a lot of various projects which were aimed at promoting of gender equality in the development cooperation.

Projects designed for the benefit of women, implemented and financed within the framework of the Polish Development Cooperation Programme in years 2005-2013

Year 2005

Afghanistan:

- “Construction of a girl’s school in Mohmandan in the Balch province”, project implemented by the “Szkoly dla Pokoju” (“Schools for Peace”) Association.

Georgia:

- “Equal status - greater opportunities for democracy. Support for the mechanisms supporting the involvement of women in public life in Georgia”, project implemented by the Partners Polska Foundation.

Africa:

- “Renovation of the Parochial Centre for the Promotion of Women in the Thiaroye District in Dakar (Senegal)”, project implemented by the Congregation of the Ursulines of the Roman Union.
- “Support in providing equipment for the sewing school for women, girls, orphaned children and HIV-infected persons in Kenia”, project implemented by the Langas Integrated HIV/AIDS Group (LIHAG). The project involved a sector-wide approach to combating poverty, concentrating on initiatives aimed at providing support to women and girls. The intention of LIHAG has been to establish a sewing school for girls whose parents died of AIDS as well as for widows and single mothers.
- “Extension and providing equipment for the sewing school for women in Masaka (Rwanda), project implemented by the Congregation of the Pallottines; objective: to provide support to women wishing to work as tailors in order to ensure their independence and dignified existence.
- “Purchase of sewing machines and tailoring equipment for graduates of the embroidery workshop in Nyakinama (Rwanda)”, project implemented by the Congregatio Sororum Angelorum.
- “Purchase of computers for six female classes in the St. Francis Parish in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo)”, project implemented by the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus; objective - to make it possible to hold additional IT classes using the computer equipment purchased.
- “Providing equipment for the delivery room of the maternity ward in Musongati (Burundi)”, project implemented by the Congregation of the Carmelitanes of the Child Jesus.

Year 2006

Afghanistan:

- “Construction of a school complex in the Qaramqul province in Afghanistan”, project implemented by the “Edukacja dla Pokoju” (“Education for Peace”) Association. The implementation of this project made it possible for approximately 2000 children (including 500 girls, who were able to attend classes owing to the school consisting of separate buildings) to receive education.

Kosovo:

- “Academy of Young Leaders of Social Entrepreneurship - Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro”, project implemented by Małopolskie Towarzystwo Oświatowe (Educational Association of the Małopolskie Province). This initiative is intended to educate future leaders on how to motivate the community to solve social issues in a creative manner. One of these issues is discrimination against women and children (in Kosovo, widows and orphans). Within the framework of the project, young people from the Balkans participated in a variety of workshops and internships at Polish social organizations.
- “Increasing the participation of women in economic activities in the Dukagjini region in Kosovo”, project implemented by the Partners Polska Foundation. 46 women participated in a series of training courses pertaining to negotiation, presentation and accounting techniques, allowing them to enhance their professional qualifications. The participants also had the opportunity to present their achievements and to promote their initiatives during the “Made in Kosovo” trade fair. A “Businesswoman of the Year” competition was also held.

Africa:

- “Encouraging women and young people to participate in economic and social activities in the Volta region in Ghana, project implemented by the Polska Zielona Sieć (Polish Green Network) Association. In order to enhance the economic and social situation of women and young people and to prevent the spreading of the HIV, a primary school in Taf Madow was constructed, allowing 180 children to receive education. These children are able to participate in courses devoted to the Batik technique, which has its roots in the local traditions and constitutes an additional source of income. Over 40 individuals have also received training pertaining to HIV/AIDS.

Year 2007

Afghanistan:

- “Improving access to education in the Kapisa province and in Kabul”, implemented by the Polish Humanitarian Action Foundation. A 7-month English language and IT course for girls from the Allahudin orphanage in Kabul.

Kosovo:

- A series of meetings in Kosovo for women pursuing private economic activities. Project implemented by the Partners Polska Foundation. Seven seminars for women were held, allowing them to learn how to establish a small company and manage its affairs.

Azerbaijan:

- “Humane childbirth. Establishment of first childbirth schools and activities aimed at reducing the mortality rate among mothers and children in Azerbaijan - combating corruption in the perinatal care system”. Project implemented by the Inna Przestrzeń (Different Space) Foundation. The project involved, inter alia, the publication of a handbook on how to establish childbirth schools and the dissemination of information materials for maternity facilities nationwide. In addition, the first two childbirth schools were established, offering free classes and comprehensive support for women. Results: increasing the level of knowledge among women and personnel of maternity clinics and improving the quality of perinatal care.

Africa:

- “The Buntu-Pikinie Social and Cultural Centre”, Senegal, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dakar. The Buntu-Pikinie Social and Cultural Centre is a meeting place for the local community where both training courses pertaining to sanitary and educational issues and vocational courses are held (cooking, sewing, garment dying etc.). The equipment purchased for the facility and its infrastructure allow the participants to obtain professional qualifications at a high level.

Year 2008

Belarus:

- “Open opportunities - activation and support of social groups facing a threat of marginalization in Belarus”, implemented by the Duke Konstanty Ostrogski Foundation. Objective of the project: to support the local women’s organizations in the process of creating new jobs within the framework of pilot initiatives. A total of 6 projects were implemented, creating jobs for 16 people; a hippotherapy centre, a mini-bakery, a mobile cafe, an agricultural tourism centre, a medical service centre and a window installation workshop have been established. The income from the economic activities pursued was earmarked for the development of individual entrepreneurship and the support of women’s organizations acting for the benefit of people facing the threat of marginalization.

Georgia:

- “Active Georgia. The Women’s Local Government Academy”, project implemented by the International Initiatives Bureau, aimed at proactive women from the Tbilisi and Kutaisi districts, who were able to participate in a series of training courses, debates and workshops devoted to the principles of operation of local government, the role of women in local development and the paths to success.

Afghanistan:

- Providing aid to SOPWC (Supportive Organization for Poor Women and Children) - a shelter for widows and children in Kabul”, a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kabul. The SOPWC maintains a shelter for

impoverished women and children, providing them with social care. Within the framework of the project, food, medicines, hygienic products, clothing and equipment for the facility have been purchased.

- “Renovation of the maternity ward at the provincial hospital in Ghazni”, project implemented by the Polish Specialist Team within the Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team. Result: improvement of sanitary and hygienic conditions.

The Palestinian Autonomy:

- “Developing entrepreneurship among women - Small animals, high value: animal husbandry and manufacture of dairy products by women from the Palestinian Autonomy, 2008”, a project implemented by the Polish Humanitarian Action Foundation. Objective of the project: ensure the development of a dairy products cooperative ran by women from poor families. The beneficiaries of the project received professional counselling and practical support with respect to the pursuit of their activities.

Year 2009

Afghanistan:

- “WAW (Women for Afghan Women) Family Counselling Centre in Kabul”, a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kabul. Beneficiaries: victims of violence and human rights violations. Result: more than 200 Afghan women have received legal aid, access to social services and safe shelter. Project co-financed by Cordaid, the Embassy of Finland in Kabul and SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency).
- “Equal opportunities through access to education for boys and girls in Herat - school construction project”, a project implemented by the “Education for Peace” Association. On a plot of land donated to the Afghan Ministry of Education by one of the citizens a building with a surface area of 960 sq. m. was erected, containing 10 classrooms and supporting facilities. A total of 1500 students aged 7-18 have begun their education at the new school.
- “Women’s Park”, project implemented by the Polish Specialist Team within the Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team. In 2009, the first stage of the construction effort has been completed - the area of the park has been levelled, water wells, an underground water reservoir and a wall have been constructed. Objective of the project: to create a space for Afghan women to meet and hold discussions, relax, receive education and engage in trading activities.
- “Professional training for women in the Khwaja Omari district” - a project implemented by the Polish Specialist Team within the Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team. Within the framework of the project, a total of 200 women have received education (writing, reading and math classes as well as vocational training). Objective of the training programme: to reduce illiteracy among women in the towns of Aqqacy, Deh Daulat, Pai Masowali and Deh Darat and to increase their qualifications.

Africa:

- “No more malaria! Non-pharmacological prevention of malaria with particular emphasis on pregnant women and young children”, project implemented by the Verbist Centre for Missionary Animation. An education campaign aimed at the citizens of the Cacucaco district (**Angola**), purchase of mosquito nets, medicines, care products for children as well as laboratory equipment for the detection of malaria and accompanying diseases for the St. Luke Health Centre in Kifangondo.

India:

- “Professional education of Dalit women with no means of support and of widows for the purposes of commencing economic activities in the Kadamalaikundu region, Theni district, Tamilnadu, India”, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Delhi. The project involved the following activities: professional training courses for women (tailoring and foundations of micro-entrepreneurship). Objective: to provide support for widows from families of dependent agricultural labourers who remain on the margin of the traditional Hindu society.

Year 2010

Eastern Partnership:

- “Partnership for human rights - Poland - Georgia - Moldova”, project implemented by the Office of the Ombudsman. Objective: to empower the ombudsmen in Eastern Partnership countries; to ensure the participation of judicial authorities and public administration authorities as well as non-governmental social organizations in the process of creation of the democratic state under the rule of law. One of the 5 main areas of the project is the Equal Treatment Mechanism and the issue of counteracting discrimination, including gender-based discrimination. The project encompassed the following activities: organization of training courses and workshops, cooperation in individual areas of the protection of rights and freedoms resulting in the commencement or reinforcement of existing mechanisms for the protection of fundamental rights.

Belarus:

- “A step towards equality: gender enlightenment as an important factor in the process of building a civic society in Belarus”, project implemented by the “Wiedza Powszechna” (“Common Knowledge”) Educational Association. Objective: to introduce gender enlightenment issues into the educational system in Belarus, implementing the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) adopted by the UN General Assembly on 18.12.1979. Key components: identification of manifestations of discrimination, making efforts aimed at the dissemination of information, exposing incidents of discrimination and providing anti-discrimination education aimed at the teaching community as well as encouraging this community to participate in the dialogue with non-governmental organizations and in the transfer of good practices.

Georgia:

- „WING - inclusionary policy in the activities of local government in Georgia”, project implemented by the Office of the City of Bydgoszcz. Objective: reinforcement of activities for the benefit of marginalized and excluded groups at a local level by increasing the competences of local government personnel in the town of Terjola as well as of the Georgian local government units engaged in cooperation with LDA; increasing the competences of beneficiaries with respect to encouraging social and professional activity among women on the basis of the social cooperative formula, workshops and coaching.

Africa:

- “The centre for the professionalization of micro-entrepreneurship in the outer districts of Dar es Salaam as a method of ensuring equality of economic opportunities”, project implemented by the Centre for Development Cooperation. Objective of the project: to develop capabilities in the area of capturing sales markets for small manufacturers located on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam. Apart from the economic aspect, the project also involves ensuring a permanent change in the structure of the population engaging in economic activities in order to ensure an increase participation of underprivileged groups, including women. One of the three main direct objectives is the attainment of financial independence by the women participating in the project.

Year 2011

Georgia:

- “Supporting women’s entrepreneurship in rural areas in the Tkibuli and Tschaltubo regions of Georgia”, project implemented by the FER EcoDevelopment Foundation. Objective of the project: to improve the socio-economic living conditions of women in selected regions of Georgia (Tkibuli and Tschaltubo), with particular emphasis on supporting the development of local women’s entrepreneurship based on regional traditions and its natural resources, increasing the degree of professional and social activity of women in the Tkibuli and Tschaltubo regions, increasing the potential and independence of local leaders in selected regions, integration and increasing the degree of commitment of citizens in the process of solving local problems as well as the development of the potential of the Tkibuli region in the field of tourism, based on its natural resources.

Africa:

- “Actions for the prevention of cervical cancer and for the treatment of pre-cancerous lesions in women living in the suburbs of Dakar (Senegal)”, project implemented by the Cultures of the World Foundation. Objective: increasing the diagnostic and medical capabilities of women’s reproductive health centres in Dakar; decreasing morbidity and increasing awareness among women in the field of cervical cancer prevention, increasing the knowledge and awareness of medical personnel (nurses, midwives).
- “Supporting women’s associations as a method of reconstruction of local community bonds and small enterprises in the rural areas of Burundi”, project implemented by the Poland - East Africa Economic Foundation. Objective of the project: supporting the

Burundi society in the process of transition from post-conflict phase to development phase through the support of small enterprises and reconstruction of local bonds and social solidarity. The project involves providing support to women's self-help groups: the Association for Mothers of Special-needs Children, the Association of Women of the Kanyosha Commune providing care to widows and orphans as well as the Repatriated Persons Association through rice cultivation, establishing a sewing workshop and organizing training programmes.

- “Supporting women and farmers in the development of agriculture, food production and ensuring access to water reserves in the Northern and Volta regions (Ghana)”, project implemented by the “Polish Green Network” Union of Associations. Objective of the project: to reduce poverty and ensure sustainable and stable development of agricultural regions of Ghana through the support of agriculture, food processing, facilitating access to water and the prevention of malaria as well as professional education and activation of women and farmers from agricultural areas in selected regions.

Year 2012

Ukraine:

- “The Ukrainian Vinnytsia region - a region of active women”, a project implemented by the Association for the Support of Entrepreneurship in Końskie;
- “The University Careers Centre as a form of professional activation of men and women prior to their entry to the labour market” - a project implemented by Małopolska Agencja Energii i Środowiska Sp. z o. o. (the Agency for Energy and the Environment of the Małopolskie Province).

Georgia:

- “Education and rehabilitation for the breast cancer survivors club”, a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi.

Serbia:

- “Tailoring and spinning as an opportunity for women in Leskovac to overcome poverty”, a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Belgrade.

Central Asia:

- “Weaving your future - development of rural areas in the Sogdian district in Tajikistan”, a project implemented by the “Education for Democracy” Foundation.
- “Development of women's cooperatives in the Shahrtuz region in southern Tajikistan”, a project implemented by the Polish Centre for International Support Foundation.
- “Protecting motherhood and facilitating access to high-quality healthcare in GBAO (Uzbekistan), project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tashkent.

The Palestinian Autonomy:

- “Equal educational opportunities for girls in the Al Amarii camp - providing additional equipment for the local fencing club”, a project implemented by the Representative Office of the Republic of Poland in Ramallah.

Middle East:

- “Establishment of, and providing equipment for, the IT room in the Queen Zain Al Sharaf Secondary School for Girls in Akaba (Jordan), a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Amman;
- “Computerization and purchase of additional equipment for the „Sayedet al Zanabek” school for girls (Syria), a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Damascus.

Africa:

- “Creating a place for learning as a path to self-development of women”, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Algiers (Algeria);
- A project for the economic support of women, implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Abuja (Nigeria);
- “A caravan for reproductive health in Kedougou (Senegal)”, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Rabat;
- “Providing state-of-the-art medical equipment for the delivery room at the Kiabakari health centre (Tanzania)”, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Nairobi;
- „Upendo Unaojali” (Love and Care) - extending state-of-the-art prenatal and postnatal care, including new opportunities for hospitalization of patients at the Kiabakari health centre, project implemented by the Kiabakari Foundation.

Latin America:

- “Reinforcing the economic position of women facing extreme poverty in the Lagunillas commune, Región Chaco, Departament Santa Cruz, Bolivia”, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Lima;
- “Towards the future - resocialization of women released from prison and providing comprehensive care for children from disadvantaged groups in Santa Cruz, Bolivia”, a project implemented by the Salesian Voluntary Missionary Service - Youth to the World.

Year 2013

Georgia:

- “Closer to education, information and employment - modernizing the resources of Georgian libraries”, a project implemented by the Centre for the Support of Local Activities (CAL) Association;
- “Development of agricultural areas through local produce”, a project implemented by the Social Environmental Institute;
- “Education, Rehabilitation, Advocacy and Information Activities of Breast Cancer Survivors in the Struggle Against Breast Cancer”, a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi (within the framework of the so-called small grants system).

Afghanistan:

- “Purchase of computer equipment and sewing machines for the women’s shelter in Kabul”, a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kabul.

Central Asia:

- “The strength of women in women’s clubs”, a project implemented by the “Edukacja dla Demokracji” (“Education for Democracy”) Foundation (Tajikistan).
- “Support for the existing women’s cooperatives and the establishment of new cooperatives in the Shartuz region in southern Tajikistan”, a project implemented by the Polish Centre for International Support Foundation.

The Palestinian Autonomy:

- “Improving the quality of healthcare services for pregnant women and infants in the Betlehem district by providing the obstetrics hospital with specialist medical equipment”, project implemented by the Representative Office of the Republic of Poland in Ramallah.

Africa:

- “Improving the quality of life of women in rural areas” (Nigeria), a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Abuja;
- “Modernization of the women’s centre for vocational development in Khartoum (Sudan), a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland on Cairo;
- “Purchase of additional equipment and renovation of the interiors of the economic school for women and girls” (Zambia), a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Pretoria.

Latin America:

- “Towards the future - resocialization of women released from prison and providing comprehensive care for children from disadvantaged groups in Santa Cruz, Bolivia”, a project implemented by the Salesian Voluntary Missionary Service - Youth to the World.
- “Increasing the capacity for autonomous management of the production of women’s folk handicraft - ARTECAMPO”, project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Lima;
- “Tailoring workshops - increasing the degree of the professional activity of women in the Holguín province (Cuba), a project implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Havana.

Section Two: Progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action since 2009

- a) What is the status of progress in each of the twelve critical areas of concern and their strategic objectives, and relevant sections of the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly? Please provide concrete supporting evidence, including statistical data and other relevant sources.

A. Women and poverty

One of the indicators which reflects the degree of poverty is the percentage of individuals who live below the living wage level. This indicator has, for many years, attained noticeably higher values in households located in rural areas. In 2006, the number of people living below the living wage level was 7 percentage points higher for rural areas than for urban areas; from 2010 this difference has decreased to 6 percentage points. When performing an analysis of individuals living in a given household based on the gender of the reference person,²² the difference becomes apparent. In households where a woman is the person with the highest income, the percentage of individuals living below the living wage is higher; this difference is more noticeable in rural areas. The risk of poverty among single persons and single parents takes on a different form. Among single women or single mothers, the percentage of individuals living below the living wage is lower than among men who finds themselves in the same situation. Obviously, residents of rural areas within these groups are also in a significantly less advantageous situation.

Persons living below the living wage, grouped according to reference person, in rural and urban households in 2006 and 2010 (data expressed in percentages)

Individuals in households:	2006			2010		
	total	town or city	rural area	total	town or city	rural area
Total	7.8	5.2	12.0	5.7	3.4	9.4
where the reference person is:						
woman	8.5	6.1	13.2	6.5	4.1	11.2
man	7.4	4.7	11.4	5.4	3.1	8.7
single woman	1.2	0.7	3.1	1.4	0.6	4.0
single man	3.6	1.7	8.7	3.7	2.3	7.0
mother with dependent children	11.1	9.9	16.6	7.3	6.3	12.0
father with dependent children	13.1	9.1	24.1	12.9	7.3	26.0

Source: Survey of household budgets, the Central Statistical Office.

²² According to the methodology used for the analysis of household budgets, the reference person for the given household shall be the individual with the highest income. The “reference person” category has replaced the “head of the household” category.

In 2012, a research project entitled: “Situation of women in agriculture and in rural areas. Characteristics, standards, parities and expectations” was implemented; the project was financed from the Agrolinia Sectoral Counterpart Funds (CPF) (PL9005). The primary objective of the project was to produce argumentation for the purposes of developing Poland’s position with respect to the gender mainstreaming approach in the new financial perspective of the Common Agricultural Policy through the preparation of an up-to-date diagnosis of the situation of women from rural areas of Poland and the identification of their needs with respect to the support of the development of social and vocational activities in order to ensure the full usage of the intellectual capital and work resources of women in the aspect of sustainable development of rural areas (it needs to be pointed out that due to the interdisciplinary nature of the research subject, the results of the survey may also prove useful to other ministries in the course of conceptual works pertaining to the directions of support for rural areas in the new programming perspective).

A conference entitled “Is the Rural Development Programme for women? - women and the sustainable development of rural areas” was held in 2012. The conference was financed from the funds provided within the framework of the Plan of Activity of the Central Secretariat of the National Rural Network. Participants of the conference included the representatives of agricultural unions, organizations and chambers, the Farmers’ Wives Association (KGW), Local Activity Groups (LGD), the Union of Rural Communes, representatives of the scientific community, deputies to the Sejm and the European Parliament as well as representatives of government administration, the press and the media dealing with agricultural and women’s issues. The conference was accompanied by an art exhibition related to women’s issues. This endeavour was held for the purposes of the presentation of the results of research designated as “The situation of women in agriculture and in rural areas. Characteristics, standards, parities and expectations” and was intended to draw the attention of the participants of the conference to the increasing significance of the issues pertaining to the imbalanced usage of the intellectual capital and work resources of women in rural areas as well as to encourage the development of proposals for action intended to remedy the situation.

The “How to become an enterprising woman” Project. The objective of the project, implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, has been the promotion of entrepreneurship among women as well as of their active participation in social and professional activities. The activities performed within the framework of the project were intended to show women how to establish their own business and to enable them to solve the difficulties which may appear along the way by providing an opportunity to obtain individual expert’s advice. As a result of the actions performed within the framework of the project, women had the opportunity to overcome their own passivity and take actions aimed at securing a source of income for themselves. The official slogan for the project was “Women - Successful in Business”. The objective of the project has been to provide women with comprehensive support. A total of thirty 15-minute video clips were produced. One of the videos featured a short documentary about a woman who has started her own business, achieving professional fulfilment in the process. The documentary contained an accessible tutorial pertaining to issues related to entrepreneurship (legal and institutional issues, the basics of economy, management, marketing, the ability to adjust the activities performed to local requirements, obtaining the funds necessary to pursue business activities - all presented in connection with the problems encountered by the woman featured in the tutorial). In addition, television, radio and press advertisements and articles as well as billboards promoting the

concept of women in business were also prepared. The campaign also featured an interactive website for women containing all the information on entrepreneurship as well as suggestions as to how to pursue business activities and how to comply with the necessary formalities when registering a business. The project was aimed at various recipients and constituted a comprehensive source of information with respect to all aspects of economic activities. It presented an opportunity for an exchange of experiences in the area of business activity (effected by way of an online forum). An important feature of the website has been the opportunity to pose questions to the experts involved in the project. A database containing useful addresses (e.g. local government institutions, business support organizations, non-governmental organizations, institutions dedicated to the financing of business activities) as well as information on the applicable legal regulations, explained in an accessible manner, detailed descriptions of the applicable procedures etc. has also been made available to the participants of the project. In addition, the project also resulted in the establishment of a toll-free helpline designed for individuals wishing to obtain advice on the establishment or pursuit of a business; the campaign also featured the so-called “Business Bus” which appeared in 16 towns during meetings with experts involved in the project, allowing participants to take advantage of practical, individual advice on the pursuit of business activities. The project culminated with the release - in both paper and multimedia form - of a compendium of entrepreneurship entitled “How to obtain financial support for women’s business activities in years 2008-2013?”

Subsidies for women intending to start a business were granted from EU funds for years 2008-2013 within the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme Action 6.2 - Support and promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment. Within the framework of this support programme, preference is accorded to women - including, in particular, single mothers, women returning to the labour market or entering the labour market for the first time.

B. Education and training of women

Education in Poland is based upon the principles contained in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In accordance with the constitutional principles (articles 32 and 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland), which provide that no one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever and that men and women shall have equal rights in family, political, social and economic life in the Republic of Poland, including, in particular the equal right to education, with the educational system in Poland providing equal access to education at all levels of the educational process. From the 1999/2000 school year, the reform of the educational system has been implemented in subsequent stages. As a result, the system now consists of a six-year primary school, three-year lower-secondary school and upper-secondary schools, with the latter group comprising three-year general or specialized secondary schools, four-year secondary technical schools, three-year special vocational training schools as well as two-year supplementary general secondary schools, three-year supplementary secondary technical schools, basic vocational schools and post-secondary schools. Within the reporting period, access to education was equal for both men and women with respect to vocational schools. Certain slight limitations for girls (women) stemmed from the provisions of the

regulation of the Council of Ministers dated August 24, 2004, on the list of works prohibited for juvenile employees and the conditions for the employment thereof in the course of some of such works (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 200, item 2047, as amended), which prohibit girls under the age of 18 from training in such professions as blacksmith, patternmaker, operator of foundry machinery and equipment, operator of metallurgical machinery and equipment, operator of plastic forming machinery and equipment, operator of ceramics industry equipment, or miner (with respect to both underground and open-pit mining), which is justified by the elevated risks related to the aforementioned professions with respect to women's health. The vast majority of schools in the Polish educational system are coeducational schools. According to the data as at September 30, 2010, there were 700 single-sex schools for boys and 137 single-sex schools for girls. The provisions of applicable laws pertaining to general education provide that boys and girls shall attend classes separately exclusively during physical exercises as well as some family life education classes. Within the reporting period, the percentage share of girls in the overall number of primary and lower-secondary school graduates amounted to approximately 48% and 49% respectively. As far as upper-secondary schools were concerned, most girls chose general secondary schools (approximately 60%); vocational schools have proved less popular. Within the reporting period, the number of girls/women dropping out of vocational schools was higher than in the case of general secondary schools. The percentage of girls/women who decided to discontinue their education within the reporting period was as follows:

- schoolgirls who had begun education at the given level in 2002: in primary schools - 1.88%, in lower-secondary schools: 2.89%; in general secondary schools - 4.38%, in secondary technical schools - 12.05%;
- schoolgirls who had begun education at the given level in 2005: in primary schools - no data available, in lower-secondary schools: 4.33%; in general secondary schools - 7.37%, in secondary technical schools - 24.41%.

In addition, women training to become soldiers were guaranteed the option to continue education in the event of interrupting their education as a result of pregnancy, childbirth or responsibilities related to maternity. The *act on the military service of professional soldiers dated September 11, 2003* (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 90, item 593, as amended) has also introduced legal regulations allowing women to return to military school following the interruption of education as a result of pregnancy, childbirth or responsibilities related to maternity.

<i>Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary total</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
39	45	50	55	58	60	61	64	65	67	69	71	74	74	73
<i>Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary male</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
33	38	42	46	48	50	51	53	55	56	58	59	59	58	58
<i>Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary female</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
46	53	59	65	69	70	72	74	76	78	81	84	89	90	89

<i>Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1.36	1.37	1.40	1.43	1.42	1.42	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.41	1.43	1.51	1.55	1.55
<i>Adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education</i>														
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	97	97	97	97	96	96	95	95	95	95	96	96	96	97
<i>Adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education. Male.</i>														
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	97	97	97	97	96	96	95	96	95	96	96	96	96	97
<i>Adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education. Female.</i>														
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	97	97	97	97	96	96	95	95	95	95	96	96	96	97
<i>Gross enrolment rate in lower secondary. Total. All programmes.</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
98	101	100	98	97	99	100	101	101	100	99	98	98	99	100
<i>Gross enrolment rate in lower secondary. Male. All programmes.</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
98	101	100	98	97	99	100	101	101	100	99	98	98	99	100
<i>Gross enrolment rate in lower secondary. Female. All programmes.</i>														
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
98	99	98	96	96	97	98	98	98	97	96	96	96	96	97

<i>Proportion of females among tertiary education teachers. Proportion of full-time and part-time females (in %) among full-time and part-time tertiary education teachers (include foreigners).</i>				
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
42,30%	42,60%	42,70%	43,10%	43,60%

Source: <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx>

Access to education for teenage mothers

The provisions of Polish law do not in any way prevent teenage mothers from continuing education at regular schools (as opposed to schools for adults). If a teenage mother cannot continue her education at a regular school due to the need to provide care to her child, she may carry on her education at a school for adults. The provisions of the regulation of the Minister of

National Education dated December 29, 2009 *on circumstances in which a person aged 16 or 15 may be admitted to a public or non-public school for adults* (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 2, item 3) introduce, inter alia, the possibility of admission to schools for adults of teenage mothers providing care to their children, who - due to the responsibilities pertaining to childcare - are unable to attend regular schools. These regulations encourage teenage mothers to continue their education and make it possible for them to comply with the obligations of school attendance and obtaining education. Teenage girls who became pregnant before attaining the age at which the obligation of school attendance ceases to apply shall, during pregnancy, childbirth or in the postnatal period, have the right to receive individual education, to attend school or to receive education outside the school environment as well as the right to an individualized educational programme or plan and to psychological and pedagogical support.

In order to encourage women and girls to study technical and scientific subjects, the Polish government supports the “Girls as Engineers” campaign, organised since 2008, as well as the “Girls as Scientists” campaign of the Perspektywy (Perspectives) Educational Foundation and the Conference of Rectors of Polish Technical Universities. The campaign, originally devised as a single action, has now turned into a recurring event organised on a nationwide scale. Its objective is to encourage girls attending upper-secondary schools to study at technical and science faculties - ones that have the greatest future potential, for which there is the greatest demand and which allow students to take advantage of the international labour market. The “Girls as Engineers” project is based on the German model; an additional feature of this model is the “Boy’s Day”, which is celebrated in Germany in order to encourage boys to work in professions which are traditionally perceived as being the exclusive domain of women.

Furthermore, the Minister of Science and Higher Education also remains the co-organiser of the *Girls of the Future - In the Footsteps of Maria Skłodowska-Curie* competition, the objective of which is to provide support to girls who study at science, technical, medical and life science faculties and who pursue their own scientific research or participate in research projects.

Activities are also performed which are aimed at taking advantage of the potential of women in the field of science. Specific statutory provisions ensure that women are always represented in decision-making bodies in charge of science. The State Accreditation Committee and the Central Commission for Degrees and Titles must, pursuant to the relevant statutory provisions, comply with the “principle of diligence, impartiality and transparency of the activities performed and strive towards ensuring equal participation of men and women in its operations”. Women are also guaranteed at least 30% share in the composition of the State Accreditation Committee.

In 2013, the Minister of Science and Higher Education has taken patronage over the “L’Oréal Polska for Women and Science” scholarship programme. The scholarships were awarded by way of competition to Polish women of science, conducting research in the field of life sciences. The competition was aimed at women below the age of 35 (doctoral students) or below the age of 45 in case of postdoctoral students, conducting research in the following fields: biology, biochemistry, biotechnology, agriculture, medicine, pharmacy and physiology. In order to participate in the competition, the applicants had to either have the degree of Ph.D. or participate in doctoral studies.

C. Women and health

Article 68 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland provides that everyone shall be entitled to healthcare, regardless of gender. At the same time, public authorities ensure that all citizens shall, regardless of their economic condition, have equal access to health services financed from public funds. The scope and conditions pertaining to the provision of such health services as well as the terms and manner of financing of healthcare services were laid down in the act *on healthcare services financed from public funds* dated August 27, 2004 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 164, item 1027, as amended). The following categories of individuals shall be entitled to take advantage of healthcare services financed from public funds on the terms laid down in the act:

1) individuals covered by universal health insurance, whether compulsory or voluntary, hereinafter referred to as “the insured”,

2) individuals other than the insured, holding a Polish citizenship and resident on the territory of the Republic of Poland, who comply with the income criterion referred to in article 8 of the act *on social welfare* dated March 12, 2004 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 175, item 1362, as amended), with respect to whom none of the circumstances referred to in art. 12 of the said act have been identified, on the same terms and within the same scope as specified for the insured - hereinafter referred to as “beneficiaries”.

Health services shall be provided on terms specified in separate provisions and international agreements to individuals other than beneficiaries, holding a citizenship other than Polish. Pregnant women as well as women during childbirth and postnatal period benefit from extended legal protection. Public authorities are under an obligation to ensure that the aforementioned class of individuals receives special health care.

Access to healthcare for pregnant women

Pregnant women as well as women during the childbirth and postnatal periods benefit from special legal protection in the Republic of Poland. The protection of women during this period is guaranteed by domestic legislation as well as the international agreements ratified by the Republic of Poland.

Article 68.3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland dated April 2, 1997 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 78, item 483, as amended) provides that the public authorities are under an obligation to provide special health care to children, pregnant women, disabled persons and the elderly.

In accordance with article 2.1.3 of the act *on healthcare services financed from public funds* dated August 27, 2004, all women during the period of pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period who remain Polish citizens resident within the territory of the Republic of Poland - regardless of whether they remain subject to health insurance - shall have the right to receive healthcare services financed from public funds according to the principles laid down in the said act.

As of October 19, 2012, the provisions of the regulation of the Minister of Health *on the medical standards for the provision of healthcare services related to perinatal care to women during the period of physiological pregnancy, physiological childbirth, the postnatal period and the period of infant care* dated September 20, 2012 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] item 1100) have begun to apply. This regulation was preceded by the regulation of the Minister of Health *on the standards of conduct and medical procedures in the course of the provision of healthcare services related to perinatal care to women during the period of physiological pregnancy, physiological childbirth, the postnatal period and the period of infant care* dated September 23, 2010 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 187, item 1259). The current regulation, much like the previous one, lays down the standards of medical conduct in the course of the provision of healthcare services related to perinatal care to women during the period of physiological pregnancy, childbirth, the postnatal period and the period of infant care. The standards in question take into account the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WTO), the achievements of medicine based on scientific evidence as well as the Polish experience in the field of providing care to mother and child. The provisions of the standards in question have been adjusted to the Polish healthcare and legal system, with particular emphasis on patient rights referred to in the act *on patient rights and the Commissioner for Patients' Rights* dated November 6, 2008 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2012, item 159, as amended).

In accordance with the applicable delegation of legislative powers, the new regulation changes the scope of entities which are under the obligation to apply the said regulation. The provisions of the regulation of the Minister of Health *on the standards of conduct and medical procedures in the course of the provision of healthcare services related to perinatal care to women during the period of physiological pregnancy, physiological childbirth, the postnatal period and the period of infant care* dated September 23, 2010 apply to all entities engaged in the pursuit of healthcare activities. According to article 2.1.5 of the act *on healthcare activities* dated April 15, 2011 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2013, item 217), healthcare entities (within the meaning of article 4 of the aforementioned act) as well as professional practices (within the meaning of article 5 of the aforementioned act) are considered as entities which engage in the pursuit of healthcare activities.

Among the changes introduced compared to the previous regulation was the extension of the list of risk factors identified in the course of pregnancy and prior to childbirth on the basis of medical history (the addition of HIV or HCV infection) as well as the extension of the list of risk factors identified in the course of pregnancy and prior to childbirth on the basis of medical examination (the addition of rubella virus infection). The prenatal care childbirth plan now includes the option to qualify a pregnant woman to the prenatal examination programme, performed on the basis of the regulation of the Minister of Health *on guaranteed benefits within the scope of healthcare programmes* dated August 30, 2009.

The provisions pertaining to infant feeding and lactation have also received a more precise wording. New obligations include the obligation to maintain observation of the “skin to skin” contact between mother and child as well as the obligation for the individual providing care to the pregnant woman to perform a training pertaining to the correct breastfeeding methods; rules for lactation advice have also received a more precise wording. Provisions pertaining to the manner of providing instructions to the mother and the scope thereof as well as the observation of the lactation process, the correct breastfeeding techniques and the evaluation of breastfeeding

efficiency have also been explicated in greater detail. The provisions on resuscitation of newborn babies have also been adjusted to the current recommendations.

Advice provided to pregnant women, including first-time advice

Year	Advice provided to pregnant women	including first-time advice		
		until week 10 of pregnancy	until week 14 of pregnancy	after week 14 of pregnancy
2007	2 245 362	206 848	134 117	161 647
2008	2 206 895	227 339	135 823	167 851
2009	2 365 075	240 169	122 114	160 942
2010	2 223 153	263 402	111 300	136 923
2011	2 146 672	260 901	125 278	168 734

Source: Centre for Healthcare Information Systems, document MZ-12 *Report on the activities of ambulatory specialist healthcare and the employees thereof*

The data provided in table no. 1 indicates that the amount of early advice (i.e. advice provided before week 10 of pregnancy) has been increasing each year. In relation to the total amount of advice provided to pregnant women, early advice constitutes 9.21%, 10.30%, 10.15%, 11.8% and 12.15% respectively.

Births, deaths and perinatal mortality rate in years 2009-2012

Year	Births			Infant deaths		Perinatal mortality rate (‰)
	total	of which		total	of which: 0-6 days old	
		alive	dead			
2009	419 337	417 589	1 748	2 327	1 266	7.2
2010	415 030	413 300	1 730	2 057	408	6.8
2011	390 069	388 416	1 653	1 836	943	6.7
2012	387 878	386 257	1 621	1 791	918	6.5

Source: Central Statistical Office

When analysing the overall number of births in years 2009-2012 as well as the amount of early advice provided to pregnant women (i.e. advice provided before week 10 of pregnancy), one may conclude that the amount of such advice provided in subsequent years keeps rising significantly, encompassing 57.27%, 63.46% and 66.88% of the children born in years 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively. The perinatal mortality rate has also been decreasing systematically. One of the factors which contributes to this decrease in mortality rates has been the rising number of pregnant women receiving early medical care.

Data pertaining to the implementation of the prenatal examinations programme

No.	Year	Prenatal examinations programme	
		Value of procedures performed (PLN)	Number of women covered by medical care
1	2009	22 353 581	31 930
2	2010	25 073 314	36 878
3	2011	32 041 233	45 304
4	2012	28 110 502	54 071

Source: National Health Fund Central

The above data provided by the National Health Fund demonstrate that the number of women receiving prenatal care has been rising steadily over the years, which shows, in turn, that pregnant women were receiving care at an early stage and that the quality of perinatal care has seen a systematic improvement. This is because before a woman is sent for prenatal examinations, she must consult an obstetrician-gynaecologist; each referral for such examinations is issued on the basis of previously obtained indications for the performance thereof.

Access to methods and means for conscious procreation

State-of-the-art contraceptives in the form of medicinal products and medical devices, other medicinal products and medical devices used during pregnancy and necessary to ensure appropriate foetal care and protection of mother's health as well as products/devices used for the purposes of conscious procreation are registered and available in the Republic of Poland.

Within the reporting period no research on the availability of methods and means for conscious procreation has been carried out. In 2003, the Polish Gynaecological Society has issued recommendations on contraception; pursuant to the said recommendations, the following fertility control methods are available in Poland:

- methods based on periodical sexual abstinence (natural methods),
- spermicidal agents,
- condoms,
- intrauterine devices, including devices releasing progestogen into the uterus,
- Hormonal preparations with one or two active ingredients, used in the form of orally administered pills, transdermal patches or injections.

The following medical criteria are applied for the purposes of evaluation of various contraception methods:

- efficiency,
- reversibility,

- safety,
- acceptance, tolerance,
- benefits other than contraceptive effects

As a rule, contraceptives available in the Republic of Poland are not financed from public funds.

One needs to emphasize that there is a wide selection of hormonal contraceptives on the Polish market in the form of orally administered pills with a varying composition and hormonal content, including hormonal “morning-after” pills containing levonorgestrel (Escapelle) as well as modern transdermal systems; these are not subject to reimbursement. It follows that the prices of the medical products in question vary between individual entities operating in the retail sector. Additionally, measures such as spermicidal agents in the form of vaginal globules as well as condoms are available on an OTC basis.

Furthermore, the National Health Fund provides reimbursement with respect to the insertion of an intrauterine contraceptive device. Appendix no. 5a to the *disposition dated November 7, 2012 (no. 71/2012/DSOZ) of the President of the National Health Fund on the conditions for the conclusion and implementation of agreements in the field of ambulatory specialist care* refers to a procedure for the insertion of an intrauterine contraceptive device, listing it as one of the health services in the field of girls’ gynaecology, obstetrics and gynaecology, AIDS treatment and endocrinology.

Pursuant to art. 9 of the act *on family planning, human foetus protection and preconditions for the admissibility of abortion* dated January 7, 1993 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 17, item 78, as amended), the Council of Ministers is under an obligation to present the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, until July 31 each year, with a report on the implementation of the act and the consequences of the application thereof. The report referred to above provides a detailed account of the actions performed throughout the given year by the Council of Ministers with respect to the implementation of the act on family planning, the protection of the human foetus and the preconditions for the admissibility of abortion.

Currently, the provisions of articles 38 and 39 of the medical and dental practitioners act provide that wherever a medical practitioner wishes to take advantage of the so-called “conscience clause”, he or she shall be under an obligation to indicate that the relevant medical service may realistically be received from another practitioner or healthcare entity.

Pursuant to the provisions of the act, a physician may refrain from treatment or discontinue such treatment, unless any delay in the provision of medical care could bring about the risk of death, grievous bodily harm or significant disorder of health as well as in other cases where time is of the essence. In cases where a physician refrains from providing a medical service which remains incompatible with his or her conscience, he or she shall be under an obligation to provide the patient or his/her statutory representative with notice of such fact sufficiently in advance and point towards realistic options for obtaining such service from another physician or healthcare entity.

Healthcare programmes in the field of family planning, conscious motherhood and medical care for pregnant women

In 2012, the following state healthcare policy programmes having a significant impact on the improvement of the health condition of women and infant children were financed from the budget of the Minister of Health:

Programme for comprehensive intrauterine diagnostics and therapy with respect to the prevention of consequences and complications of birth defects and congenital diseases, intended to ensure the improvement of foetal and neonatal health for years 2009-2013.

The programme involves the use of intrauterine diagnostics and therapy, making it possible to reduce the amount of complications and consequences of congenital diseases and birth defects. Intrauterine correction and reducing the harmful consequences of the given defect or congenital disease contributes towards the improvement of the intrauterine condition of the foetus, extending the duration of pregnancy and ensuring the birth of children in a better overall health condition; in some cases, it also constitutes a life-saving measure.

The main objectives of the programme are: intrauterine procedures on the foetus, ultrasonography examinations for the purposes of qualifying the patient for surgery and ultrasonography of the foetus.

In 2012, a total amount of PLN 916 382.81 was allocated for the programme.

Provision of care for pregnant women and children infected with HIV and suffering from AIDS

In accordance with its competences, the National Centre for AIDS performs tasks related to preventing and counteracting HIV/AIDS.

The activities of the Centre are intended to prevent HIV from spreading, increase the social and psychological quality of life of HIV-positive individuals and AIDS sufferers, their families and relatives through:

- prevention of HIV infections and ensuring appropriate access to information, education and services with respect to HIV/AIDS prevention,
- increasing the social and psychological quality of life of HIV-positive individuals, their families and relatives,
- ensuring easy access to diagnostics and ARV treatment,
- improving the quality and accessibility of diagnostics and healthcare for HIV-positive patients and AIDS sufferers as well as individuals exposed to the risk of HIV infection,
- reducing the number of HIV infections among children.

The legal basis for the actions performed within the scope referred to above comprises, inter alia, the regulation of the Council of Ministers *on the National Programme on the Prevention of HIV Infections and Combating AIDS* dated February 15, 2011 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 44, item 227). In 2012, tasks within the framework of the Programme were being performed in accordance with the "Schedule for the implementation of the National Programme for Prevention of HIV Infections and Combating AIDS for years 2012-2016".

Medical services for foreign nationals

Medical services for foreign nationals are provided in accordance with article 73.1 of the act *on the protection of foreign nationals within the territory of the Republic of Poland* dated June 13, 2003 (consolidated text - Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for June 19, 2012, item 680). Due to the special nature of the group of foreign nationals under the care of the Social Welfare Department, particular emphasis is placed on the level of medical care provided to women. In this aspect, specialist medical care continues to play a key role. Efforts have been made - primarily for cultural reasons - in order to ensure, to the fullest degree possible, the possibility of selection of the physician's gender, which is of particular significance in the case of specialist gynaecological care. Taking into account the needs of single women and women raising children related to the issue of improvement of the security of this particular group of foreign nationals, the Office for Foreigners has designated one of its facilities for use exclusively by members of this group of individuals. Since 2010, the facility for foreign nationals who have applied for refugee status, located in the Targówek district of the city of Warsaw, has been used for the accommodation of single women and women with children

Smoking rate among women

Definition: Smoking is defined as the daily smoking of at least one cigarette.

Variable (% of corresponding age population)	1995	2004	2009
Smokers 15+	29,6	26,3	23,8
Smokers 15+, women	19,4	19,3	17,9
Smokers 15+, men	40,9	33,9	30,9
Young smokers 15 - 24	16,4	16,5	15,5
Young smokers 15 - 24, women	10,0	12,2	11,0
Young smokers 15 - 24, men	22,7	20,7	20,3

D. Violence against women

Family violence is a serious problem in Poland. However, it is only during the last dozen-odd years that a change in the social perception of this problem has become apparent; during this period, a number of coordinated remedies have been implemented in order to address the problem. First and foremost, the phenomenon in question has begun to attract attention, while the view that violence constitutes a criminal act and must be prevented has become commonplace. In 2010, the act on the prevention of family violence was amended to include the obligation to initiate the "Blue Card" procedure; the obligation in question is applicable to five sectors, i.e. the social welfare institutions, the commission for solving alcohol problems, the education system, the healthcare system and the Police. This solution demonstrates that the significance of this tool for the efforts aimed at combating family violence has become acknowledged.

An important factor in the efforts aimed at the protection of the victims of domestic violence is the introduction, within the last few years, of new legal instruments which make it possible to take effective actions in the field of prevention of domestic violence.

The following internal actions performed by the institutions of the criminal justice system which have the most frequent dealings with victims of criminal acts deserve a mention:

Guidelines of the Attorney General dated February 20, 2009, on actions to be taken for the benefit of victims - for prosecutors conducting and supervising preparatory proceedings, containing 15 guidelines pertaining to the victims of crimes. These guidelines have resulted in the strengthening of the position of victims when dealing with the Police, the prosecution service and the courts.

Guidelines of the Attorney General dated December 21, 2011 on the principles of conduct for the general organizational units of the prosecution service with respect to the prevention of family violence. A significant factor for the protection of the victims of domestic violence has been the implementation, within the last few years, of new legal instruments which makes it possible to perform efficient actions in the field of prevention of domestic violence, including amendments increasing the efficiency of the Police in this area of activity:

The act on the Police dated April 6, 1990 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] for 2011, no. 287, item 1687, as amended), conferring upon Police officers the right to apprehend the perpetrator of domestic violence who poses a threat to human life or health, according to the procedure laid down in article 15 (article 15a).

Article 244 of the Code of Criminal Procedure dated June 6, 1997 (Dz. U. [the Journal of Laws] no. 89, item 555, as amended) now contains provisions pertaining to the right of the Police to apprehend a suspect where there are reasons to believe that the individual in question has committed a violent crime against a person with whom he or she jointly occupies a house or flat and where there is a risk that the suspect may commit another violent offence against such a person, especially where he or she has threatened to commit such an offence (article 244 § 1a of the Code of Criminal Procedure). The police is now under an obligation to apprehend the perpetrator where the criminal act referred to above has been committed using a firearm, knife or other dangerous object (article 244 § 1b of the Code of Criminal Procedure) and may also order the accused individual to abandon the premises occupied jointly with the victim.

The following internal actions performed by the institutions of the criminal justice system which have the most frequent dealings with victims of criminal acts deserve a mention:

1. The Guidelines of the Attorney General dated February 20, 2009, on the actions to be taken for the benefit of the victim - for prosecutors conducting and supervising preparatory proceedings, containing 15 guidelines pertaining to the victims of crimes. These guidelines have resulted in the strengthening of the position of victims when dealing with the Police, the prosecution service and the courts.
2. Guidelines of the Attorney General dated December 21, 2011 on the principles of conduct for the general organizational units of the prosecution service with respect to the prevention of family violence.

Furthermore, on November 29, 2010, the Minister of Justice, the Police Commander in Chief and the Head of the State Agency for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems have signed the Memorandum pertaining to the establishment and functioning of an intervention and

information hotline for victims of domestic violence used by individuals who had previously been convicted of violent crimes or unlawful threats vis-à-vis their family members, operating within the framework of the “Blue Line” Nationwide Emergency Service for Victims Of Domestic Violence. The Memorandum remained in force from January 1, 2011 until December 31, 2012. On November 8, 2012, an annex to the Memorandum has been signed, extending its duration for another 5 years.

The intervention and information hotline is maintained by the State Agency for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems within the framework of the nationwide Blue Line service (0 801 12 00 02). The intended purpose of the operation of the hotline remains consistent with the statutory activities of the Police. Its functioning provides the Police with support in the performance of such activities, allowing it to provide better protection to individuals affected by violent acts perpetrated by persons who had previously been convicted of violent crimes or unlawful threats against family members. The Memorandum signed by the three institutions referred to above has paved the way towards ensuring an efficient reaction of state authorities to recurring violent conduct on the part of perpetrators of violent crimes against the members of their families. It has contributed towards a more efficient transmission of information on violent acts between the competent services. This is confirmed by the data collected by the Ministry of Justice, pertaining to a significant increase (from 300 in 2010 to 1100 in 2011) of the number of probation-related applications submitted to the courts, pertaining to the execution of a conditionally suspended prison sentence or the revocation of conditional release from correctional facility. It needs to be emphasized that every piece of information obtained from hotline operators is immediately verified, with feedback on the findings made and actions taken being relayed to the “Blue Line” Emergency Service following the verification of the information in question. It needs to be pointed out that in certain cases the Police has learned of new instances of domestic violence owing to the information provided using the hotline. Insofar as the protection of the rights of victims of criminal acts is concerned, the Police also conducts information and educational operations, including operations performed jointly with the local government units and non-governmental organizations.

Within the reporting period, in accordance with article 207 of the Criminal Code, subjecting a family member or another person who remains permanently or temporarily dependent on the perpetrator, a minor or a vulnerable person whose vulnerability is the consequence of his or her mental or physical condition, to physical or psychological abuse, carried a sentence of imprisonment of at least 3 months and up to 5 years. If the conduct in question was accompanied by extreme cruelty, the criminal act carried a sentence of imprisonment of at least one year and up to 10 years. In addition, other, isolated acts which involve the interference with bodily integrity of the victim and which, on their own, do not meet the statutory criteria of the crime of harassment, were also made punishable.²³ The data provided by the National Police Headquarters demonstrates that in 2002 a total of 74 366 women, 7 121 men, 30 073 children below the age of 13 and 15 955 minors (aged 13-18) were affected by domestic violence. In 2010, a total of 82 102 women, 12 651 men, 26 802 children below the age of 13 and 13 311 minors (aged 13-18) were affected by domestic violence. Detailed information on the victims of

²³ Article 217 of the Criminal Code - Whosoever assaults another person or otherwise interferes with his or her bodily integrity, shall be liable to a fine, restriction of liberty or imprisonment for a period of up to 1 year.

domestic violence, perpetrators thereof and the number of Police interventions in years 2002-2010 is included in Table A.5.1 and A.5.2 (Annex).

Within the reporting period, the Republic of Poland has performed a number of activities related to the issue of violence against women. The activities in question included legislative initiatives, promotional and information activities as well as other activities included under government programmes.

The activities pertaining to the issues in question were performed within the framework of the “Reinforcement and Extension of the Crime Victims Support Network” Programme, financed by the European Commission. In 2013, 3-day training courses for judges, prosecutors, professional probation officers, police officers, social workers and representatives of non-governmental organizations were conducted. The purpose thereof has been to increase the professional qualifications and the quality of support provided to victims of criminal acts, including, in particular, the means and methods of prevention of double victimization and the qualifications pertaining to the act on state compensation for victims of crimes. The theoretical part of the programme touched upon the issue of psychological aspects of providing support to victims of crimes. The practical (workshop) part involved a discussion on the psychological image of victims of crimes, with particular emphasis on their needs, depending on the psychological and physical condition of the given victim. In the course of the training programme, the participants were able to extend their knowledge and skills relevant for the provision of aid to victims of crimes, the prevention of double victimization as well as inter-institutional cooperation of entities which, together, may form a system of support for victims of crimes. Psychological aspects were extended to include issues pertaining to the standards applicable to children’s hearings. The training course was divided into 11 groups. The training course took place between October and November 2013, with a total of 930 individuals participating.

Within the framework of the “Safer Together” government programme, active since 2007 and intended to reduce the scale of phenomena and behaviours which are universally condemned and give rise to a feeling of threat, a number of projects aimed at counteracting domestic violence are being financed. The programmes, implemented on the province level, are aimed at, inter alia, performing interventions, educational methods and counselling - raising awareness as to rights, establishment of systemic solutions, therapy for victims and witnesses of violence, promoting appropriate types of conduct and conflict resolution, legal advice as well as conducting family mediation (e.g. the “Rodzina wolna od przemocy” (“Family without violence”) project, Pomorskie province, 2009, the “Wspólna sprawa - stop przemocy” (“Common cause - no more violence”) project, Małopolskie province, 2010, the “Razem przeciw przemocy” (“Together against violence”) project, Świętokrzyskie province, 2011, the “Żyj świadomie - bez przemocy” (“Conscious living - without violence”) project, Podkarpackie province, 2011).

Activities related to the protection of victims of domestic violence

The Ministry of Justice has made a number of legislative efforts intended to strengthen the protection of victims of family violence, including, in particular, women and children. The current act on the prevention of family violence dated July 29, 2005, defines this phenomenon as

intentional actions or omissions (whether isolated or recurring) which violate the rights or personal interests of a family member, including, in particular, where such actions place family members at a risk of loss of life or limb, interfere with their dignity, bodily integrity, freedom (including sexual freedom), cause damage to their physical or mental health and causing moral harm and suffering of persons subjected to violence (article 2.2 of the act). Domestic violence is therefore defined in broad terms and may satisfy the statutory criteria of a number of offences. The most striking example of family violence is the crime of harassment governed by article 207 of the Criminal Code (hereinafter referred to as “CC”).

For a number of years, the Ministry of Justice has been making widespread efforts intended to strengthen the position of the victims of criminal acts. In 2011, in cooperation with the National Police Headquarters and non-governmental organizations, the Ministry of Justice released the “Charter of Rights of Victims of Family Violence”. The “Charter of Rights” contains the basic list of rights and a schedule of support institutions. It provides, among others, information on contacting the Police, the 112 emergency number, the “Blue Line” Nationwide Emergency Service and institutions which offer support to victims of crimes.

At the current stage, the Charter is being distributed, inter alia, in common courts of law and among Province Marshals, who shall then distribute it, inter alia, among Specialist Support Centres for Victims of Family Violence operating within the framework of the “Crime Victims Support Network” project implemented by the Ministry in cooperation with non-governmental organizations. These institutions provide free legal and psychological support to victims of violence; some of them also provide social aid. These forms of support are available for individuals affected by all types of crimes, including victims of domestic violence. The operations of Support Centres are supplemented by the activities of volunteers who act as the victims’ counsellors and provide them with support in day-to-day issues.

The Ministry of Justice participated in the preparation and broad distribution of leaflets and posters containing information on the intervention and information hotline, active since 2011, as well as on what is domestic violence and what should victims of such violence do. The leaflets and posters have been distributed among Police units, prosecution offices as well as district and regional courts (including among court probation officers). The materials referred to above were placed in locations accessible to customers, i.e. on message boards, in customer service offices, secretariats and registry offices. Furthermore, interactive banners were placed on court websites, linking users to the “Blue Line” Nationwide Emergency Service for Victims Of Domestic Violence website. The materials in question have also been provided to Centres for Support for Victims of Crimes in order to be distributed among individuals seeking aid at those institutions. At the present stage, legislative works are underway at the Ministry of Justice, aimed at the implementation into the Polish legal order of the *Directive on the European Protection Order in Criminal Matters* adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council on November 24, 2011 (EPO in criminal matters). The deadline for the implementation of the directive is January 11, 2015. The EPO in criminal matters is linked to a victim support package. The EPO may form a useful tool in an open-border environment, where both victims and perpetrators of crimes may move freely between states. This instrument reinforces the protection of victims against reoffending perpetrators in cases where such perpetrators decide to follow their victims to another EU Member State.

The EPO makes it possible to ensure the safety of the victim by issuing protective measures against the individuals posing a threat in the form of prohibitions or orders of specific performance (e.g. prohibition on contacting the protected person, prohibition on entry to specified locations, municipalities or areas as well as prohibition on approaching the protected person); the measures in question may also continue to be applied in other EU Member States where the victim decides to relocate. Protective measures are intended to protect the victim against the conduct of perpetrators which may pose a threat to the life, physical or mental integrity, personal and sexual liberty as well as dignity of the victim.

The objective of the directive is to make it possible for protected persons (mostly victims of domestic violence) to take continuing advantage of the protective measures in the event of relocating to another Member State. At the present stage, protective measures (e.g. the prohibition on leaving the premises, prohibition on approaching the given individual) applied in one Member State do not apply in other Member States. The new regulations are intended to make it possible for victims to apply for the issuance of the so-called European Protection Order which would continue to be applicable at their new place of residence and would be enforced by the authorities in such location. This initiative will thereby contribute towards a more comprehensive implementation of the principle of the free movement of persons and will ensure the better protection for victims of criminal acts.

The EPO will mostly benefit victims of domestic violence; the fact that such an instrument is urgently needed is demonstrated by the statistics - in 2010, in Poland there were over 134 thousand notifications pertaining to cases of domestic violence (according to the Blue Card procedure). Frequently, the victim of violence wishes to change her living environment in order to separate herself from her traumatic experience. The EPO will make it possible for such a person to relocate to another Member State without fearing that the perpetrator may follow her and continue harassing her, exploiting the differences between legal systems. The protection order will be issued at the request of the victim and transmitted directly between the appropriate authorities of Member States. The directive will make it possible, in particular, to apply measures such as the prohibition of approaching the given person or, in drastic circumstances, an order to abandon the premises.

- The directive provides for the establishment of a cross-border victim protection mechanism within the territory of the European Union.
- A victim of crime (e.g. rape or extortion by force) who wishes to relocate to another country shall have the option to apply to the court for a European Protection Order which shall be recognized by the country in which the victim intends to take up residence.
- The protection order will make it possible to transfer to other countries the enforcement of protective measures such as, for example, an order to keep a specified distance from the victim or a prohibition on approaching specific locations occupied by the victim, e.g. the victim's house.

- This form of protection carries substantial significance in cases where the perpetrator knows the victim, which means that the circumstances of the case are conducive to the commission of further offences. The phenomenon of domestic violence is a perfect example of this.
- The fact that such an instrument is urgently needed, is demonstrated by the available statistics - in 2010 there were over 134 thousand notifications of domestic violence in Poland alone (according to the Blue Card procedure).

In addition, legislative works are underway at the Ministry of Justice, aimed at the implementation into the Polish legal order of the *Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters* adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council on June 6, 2011 (EPO in civil matters).

The regulation referred to above shall apply from January 11, 2015 onwards, to the protective measures issued for the purposes of protection of a person in cases where there are important reasons to believe that the life, physical or mental integrity, personal liberty, safety or sexual integrity are at risk, for example for the purposes of prevention of all forms of gender-based violence or violence in close relationships, such as physical violence, harassment, sexual violence, abuse, intimidation or other forms of direct coercion. It needs to be emphasized that the regulation in question applies to all victims, regardless of whether they are affected by gender-based violence.

Domestic violence statistics (2005-2010)

Number of domestic violence victims according to the “Blue Card” procedure

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of domestic violence victims - total:	156.788	157.854	130.682	139.747	132.796	134.866
of which: women	91.374	91.032	76.162	81.985	79.811	82.102
of which: men	10.387	10.313	8.556	10.664	11.728	12.651
children below the age of 13	37.227	38.233	31.001	31.699	27.502	26.802
minors (age 13 - 18)	17.800	18.276	14.963	15.399	13.755	13.311

Number of perpetrators of domestic violence

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of perpetrators of domestic violence - total:	97.142	96.775	81.743	86.568	81.472	83.390
of which: women	4.153	4.074	3.632	3.942	3.926	3.981
of which: men	92.776	92.526	77.937	82.425	77.326	79.204
minors	213	175	170	201	220	205

Workplace violence statistics

Complaints against sexual harassment submitted to the National Labour Inspectorate

Year	Complaints against sexual harassment - total:	Justified complaints	Unjustified complaints	Impossible to determine
2007	18	0	11	7
2008	19	2	10	7
2009	27	4	14	9
2010	28	4	13	11
2011	38	3	20	15
2012	37	2	16	19

E. Women and armed conflict

Increase in the participation of women in conflict resolution

For the last few years the number of female soldiers participating in foreign military liaison missions has been on the rise, coupled with an increase in the number of positions taken by women in Polish Military Contingents, including lower command positions.

From 2009 onwards, the Ministry of National Defence has begun to take actions aimed at the dissemination of knowledge and popularization of information concerning the implementation of the *Security Council Resolution UNSCR 1325 - women, peace and security* through an information campaign within the structures of the Polish Armed Forces, training courses pertaining to gender issues during foreign military liaison missions and the prevention of violence (including gender-based violence) in regions affected by armed conflicts. A number of experts have been trained to operate as gender advisors during foreign military liaison missions and have subsequently acted in this capacity. Numerous conferences and seminars were held, some of them with the participation of international delegates from NATO.

Increase in the number of women soldiers in years 1988-2013

Year	officers	warrant officers	sub-officers	privates	Total
1988	2				2
1989	15				15
1990	32				32
1991	64				64
1992	87				87
1993	101				101
1994	110	1			111
1995	111	1			112
1996	125	2			127
1997	146	4			148
1998	160	6			166
1999	182	51	5		238
2000	200	63	14		277
2001	213	74	16		303
2002	215	125	17		357
2003	232	126	18		376
2004	345		167		512
2005	437		214	5	656
2006	475		294	13	782
2007	550		355	57	962
2008	779		583	140	1502
2009	782		612	155	1549
2010	869		660	222	1751
2011	917		666	371	1954
2012	1001		672	711	2384
2013	1058		682	966	2706

Command positions occupied by women soldiers as in 2013

Position	Officers	Sub-officers	Total
COMMUNICATIONS UNIT COMMANDER		2	2
BATTERY COMMANDER	6		6
INFOR COMBAT CENTRE COMMANDER	2		2
SQUAD COMMANDER		78	78
TRANSPORT SQUAD COMMANDER		1	1
ARTILLERY SQUAD COMMANDER		5	5
SECTION COMMANDER	27		27
GROUP COMMANDER	1	1	2
MEDEVAC GROUP COMMANDER		28	28
MEDICAL GROUP COMMANDER		1	1
FLIGHT COMMANDER	2		2

TECHNICAL FLIGHT COMMANDER	2		2
COMPANY COMMANDER	20		20
SERVICE COMMANDER	8	22	30
SYSTEM SERVICE COMMANDER	1		1
TRAINING DEVICE SERVICE COMMANDER		1	1
PLATOON COMMANDER	168		168
BASE COMMANDER		2	2
POINT COMMANDER		1	1
RADIO TRANSMITTER COMMANDER		1	1
SECTION COMMANDER	2	5	7
STATION COMMANDER	6	2	8
COMMAND VEHICLE COMMANDER		10	10
CREW COMMANDER	2	5	7
TEAM COMMANDER	6	6	12
EVAC TEAM COMMANDER		2	2
MED TEAM COMMANDER	1		1
Total	254	173	427

Percentage share of women soldiers in the Armed Forces in individual years

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Land Forces	1.91%	3.28%	5.03%	2.75%
Air Force	2.09%	3.14%	3.77%	2.87%
The Navy	2.28%	3.80%	4.63%	3.50%
Other	1.64%	2.46%	2.76%	2.88%
Total	1.90%	2.11%	2.55%	2.86%
senior officers	0.82%	0.92%	1.07%	1.10%
junior officers	7.03%	7.75%	9.07%	9.58%
sub-officers	1.68%	1.75%	1.95%	1.96%
privates	0.7%	1.11%	1.83%	2.41%

Actions performed for the purposes of promoting gender equality in external relations and development policies:

- the commencement of implementation of the UN Security Council resolution no. 1325 from year 2000 on women, peace and security, including, inter alia, through the development in 2009 (within the framework of NATO) of guidelines on the inclusion of gender issues in training courses pertaining to the participation of women in peacekeeping missions, resolution of armed conflicts and shaping security solutions, as well as through the implementation in 2012 of the new Directive BI-SC 40-1.
- delegates of female soldiers participate in the proceedings of the Committee on Women in NATO Armed Forces in Brussels. Within the framework of the operations carried out by NATO in March 2010, a delegate of women soldiers participated in the seminar entitled “The Gender perspective into ESDP missions and operations” in Madrid, dedicated to gender equality during EU missions and operations, including, in particular, the implementation by EU Member States of the UN Security Council resolution no. 1325/2000 on women, peace and security, with particular emphasis on the role of women in uniforms,
- each year, delegates of women soldiers participate in the conference of the NATO Gender Equality Committee held in the NATO Headquarters in Brussels, dedicated to the exchange of experience with respect to the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution no. 1325. In 2009, the status of the BI-S.C. 40-1 has been presented in connection with the implemented training standards; an exchange of best practices has also taken place. In 2010, a training model for persons participating in missions and the Guidance for NATO Gender Mainstreaming were developed and the NATO Action Plan for the implementation of resolution UNSCR 1325 was adopted. In 2011, operation progress indicators were developed and templates for UNSCR 1325 implementation reports were accepted. In 2012, UNSCR 1325 was included in operational planning and the amended directive BI SC 40-1 was adopted. In 2013 the actions for the elimination of violence against women and gender-based violence during NATO missions and operations were developed.

A number of publications as well as a film and an exhibition have been prepared, all of them dealing with the theme of *Women soldiers on foreign military missions*; they were subsequently presented during conferences, seminars and meetings on security issues in order to popularize the activities of women in this field.

The resolution UNSCR 1325 - Women, peace and security is being disseminated within the Ministry of National Defence, drawing attention to the need to increase the number of women holding decision-making positions in the defence sector.

F. Women and the economy

In years 2005-2008, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy implemented projects intended, inter alia, to change the social atmosphere among employers and to encourage them to treat women entering the labour market following childbirth as well as returning to work following maternity or parental leave as potentially efficient and desirable employees as well as to enhance the self-esteem of such women and to increase their motivation to enter/re-enter the labour market (“Between family and work - reconciling the social and professional roles of women”); to disseminate the knowledge on flexible forms of employment among women, thereby increasing their motivation to actively participate in the labour market (“Flexible forms of employment - combining professional life and childcare”); to raise awareness of the amended Labour Code

with respect to counteracting gender-based discrimination (“Promoting anti-discriminatory provisions of the labour law”); to raise awareness on reconciling professional and family/private roles of men and women in the family (“Partnership within the family - an opportunity for women on the labour market”); and to raise awareness on the situation of women on the labour market (“Woman - Family - Work”).

In years 2010-2012, the “Gender mainstreaming as a tool of change on the labour market” project was implemented, co-financed from European Commission funds within the framework of the Programme for Employment and Social Inclusion - PROGRESS, priority 5 - Gender Equality. The primary objective of the project is to designate solutions conducive towards the reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities, including the dissemination of knowledge on employee’s rights pertaining to paternity among working fathers. The implementation of the project was intended to support the efforts aimed at raising awareness of employers, employees and representatives of the labour market environment (e.g. trade unions, employee organizations, chambers of commerce) with respect to the implementation of employment policies beneficial to working families as well as the elimination of gender prejudice - the perception of women as less desirable employees due to the amount of responsibilities related to childbirth and childcare which they tend to have.

In 2013, the implementation of the “*Equality between men and women in the economic decision-making processes as a tool of social change*” project, co-financed from the funds of the PROGRESS Community Programme has begun. The objective of this project is to promote the participation of women and men in economic decision-making processes as well as the development of a specific programme for action aimed at ensuring a balanced presence of men and women on top positions at various levels of both private and public companies in all sectors of the economy.

The project is aimed at:

1. Employers, large corporations (250 employees and more), high-level managers, HR departments and personnel training departments
2. Persons at working age
3. Ministers of EU countries dealing with issues of gender equality (the Ministerial Round Table during the Congress of Women)

The following actions will be performed within the framework of implementation of the project:

- performance of a survey on a representative group of citizens pertaining to the current situation of women with respect to the economic decision-making process (performed by TNS Polska in December 2013),
- preparation of a report on the situation of women with respect to the economic decision-making process in Poland, with particular emphasis on the viability study pertaining to the application of gender balance policies by companies with respect to decision-making bodies,
- development of a tool consisting of a training guidebook and module intended to allow managers and HR directors to advocate the promotion of women to top positions within their organizations,

- the performance of a pilot programme with respect to the application of the tool referred to above as well as 10 seminars devoted to the implementation of the application thereof in large companies,
- creation of a website for the purposes of dissemination of the report and guidebook/a platform for the exchange of experience with respect to the mechanisms applied in corporations in the field of gender equality in the course of economic decision-making processes,
- promotion and popularization of the issues to which the project pertains among the population by way of:
 - a workgroup for state-of-the-art communications technologies
 - a dedicated website
 - radio programmes
 - press articles
 - press conferences.
- organization of an EU Ministerial Round Table for Gender Equality during the sixth Congress of Women for the purposes of enabling the exchange of experiences of individual countries as well as the review of good practices applied in the field of gender equality in the course of economic decision-making processes,
- organization of a discussion panel during the sixth Congress of Women, devoted to business networking with respect to promotion of gender equality in economic decision-making processes.

Activities of the Ministry of Economy:

Examples of active efforts within the scope of implementation of the objectives specified in this area are conferences entitled “The Union is a Woman”, organised in June 2009 in Warsaw. as well as “Entrepreneurship and activity of women and the economy”, held in October 2012 in Warsaw.

The “The Union is a Woman” conference was dedicated to the assessment of the role and position of women in public life five years following Poland’s accession to the European Union as well as within the 20 years of the period of systemic transformation. This conference also attempted to evaluate how did the five-year period of functioning on the single market influence the pro-entrepreneurial views held by Polish women. The primary objective of the aforementioned conference has been the promotion of the model of an active, successful woman as well as the presentation of challenges which a contemporary woman must face, including the changes taking place in the world of business and politics.

The discussions taking place during the conference have focused, inter alia, on the following issues: *Women in politics*, *How do women go about the business of governance?* and *Women in business*. About 500 individuals participated in the conference, including well-known representatives of the Polish political elite, female and male deputies to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, representatives of the business community, social leaders, representatives of influential social organizations (including employer associations), representatives of the scientific, cultural and artistic communities and the media.

The “Entrepreneurship and activity of women and the economy” conference presented another opportunity for discussion on the role of women in the economy. More than 100 women entrepreneurs have taken part in this event, representing a variety of professions: high-ranking local, regional and central government officials as well as representatives of the private sector, the business community, financing institutions and experts.

The main theme of the conference has been the issue of equality of men and women on the labour market, including, in particular, counteracting gender stereotyping, equal pay for men and women for identical work, reconciling professional and family roles (with respect to both men and women) as well as equal opportunities on the labour market for employees over the age of 50. The issues touched upon during the event included the participation of women in public life, returning to work after maternity and parental leaves as well as the opportunities for the establishment of company nurseries and kindergartens. The attention of the participants was drawn to the need of promoting an entrepreneurship culture among women through education, management training and changes in the accepted social values as well as promoting knowledge on the entrepreneurship of women and their role in society and the economy - for the benefit of the development of the economy and the society as such.

In 2012, a research project entitled: “The situation of women in agriculture and in rural areas. Characteristics, standards, parities and expectations” was completed, financed from the Agrolinia Sectoral Counterpart Funds (CPF) (PL9005). The primary objective of the project was to prepare argumentation for the purposes of developing Poland’s position with respect to the gender mainstreaming approach in the new financial perspective of the Common Agricultural Policy through the preparation of an up-to-date diagnosis of the situation of women from rural areas of Poland and the identification of their needs with respect to the support of the development of social and vocational activities in order to ensure the full usage of the intellectual capital and work resources of women with respect to sustainable development of rural areas. This issue was already discussed in the previous section of this document.

	Professional activity rate					
	15 and more			15-24		
	total	men	women	total	men	women
2010	55.3	63.7	47.6	34.6	39.3	29.6
2011	55.5	64.0	47.8	33.5	38.7	28.1
2012	55.5	64.3	48.1	33.6	38.5	28.3

	Unemployment rate		
	15-24		
	total	men	women
2010	23.7	22.4	25.5
2011	25.8	23.6	28.9
2012	26.5	24.1	29.9

Specification	Share of employed individuals by sectors								
	industrial sector			service sector			agricultural sector		
	%								
	total	men	women	total	men	women	total	men	women
2010	30.3	41.7	16.1	56.6	44.9	71.2	13.1	13.4	12.7
2011	30.7	42.0	16.5	56.4	44.5	71.3	12.9	13.5	12.2
2012	30.4	41.9	16.1	57.0	44.8	72.2	12.6	13.3	11.7

Gender pay gap in unadjusted form in %

Industry, construction and services (except public administration, defence, compulsory social security)

TIME ▾ GEO ▼	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
European Union (28 countries)	:	:	:	:	16.4(p)
European Union (27 countries)	:	17.3	17.2(p)	16.2	16.3(p)
Euro area (17 countries)	:	16.8	16.9(p)	16.5	16.5(p)
Poland	14.9	11.4	8.0	4.5	5.5

24-hour time use by gender (2004)			
<i>Average duration of an activity on hours and minutes¹⁾</i>			
	<i>Total</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>
<i>Household and family care</i>	3.21	4.22	2.13
<i>of which:</i>			
<i>Childcare</i>	0.24	0.33	0.14

G. Women in power and decision-making

Despite the fact that political rights in Poland are equal for all citizens, pronounced inequalities have been observed with respect to the use of those rights. This issue pertains to a variety of groups and is related, inter alia, to gender. Discrimination with respect to the access to the highest political positions continues to occur - despite the current act which guarantees women 35% of all slots on candidate lists, women deputies constitute a mere 24% of all deputies to the Polish Sejm. The limited number of women deputies fails to reflect the importance of women in society. The mechanism which is responsible for this state of affairs may be the allocation of lower slots on the candidate lists to women candidates. The main barriers to the promotion of women to prominent positions, however, are the cultural and mental mechanisms which result in women being perceived as inextricably bound to the private sphere of life; as a consequence, their life ambitions are seen as pre-determined.

Research performed by the Public Affairs Institute reveals the mechanisms used for the purposes of both promotion and elimination of women on the lists of candidates in both local and parliamentary elections. The results of the research referred to above also describe the mechanisms governing the local and parliamentary election campaigns with respect to the presence of women candidates and issues which are relevant to women.²⁴ These research results also demonstrate that women are not recommended as candidates for prestigious positions within the executive branch, i.e. mayors or province governors; neither are they included in party authorities. The elections which have taken place so far have shown that there are no difficulties in finding women candidates and that these candidates have excellent political skills and remain involved in the development of the democratic society. The indicated problems may be the consequence of internal candidate selection mechanisms. This phenomenon should be subjected to in-depth monitoring.

Within the reporting period, women have held the following positions in the Polish government:

- 1) the coalition government of the Social-Democratic Alliance and the Labour Union (October 2001 - May 2004) - two women have held the following government positions: the Minister

²⁴ The Public Affairs Institute - <http://www.isp.org.pl/programy.program-prawa-i-instytucji.projekty.kobiety-na-listach-wyborczych,639.html>

- of National Education and Sports (2001-2004), the Minister of Justice (2001-2002), which constituted 12.5% of all ministers - members of government;
- 2) the coalition government of the Social-Democratic Alliance and the Labour Union (May 2004 - October 2005) - one woman has held the following government position: the Deputy Prime Minister (2004-2005) and Minister of Social Policy (2005), which constituted approximately 5.5% of all ministers - members of government;
 - 3) the coalition government of Law and Justice, the League of Polish Families and Self-defence (October 2005 - July 2006) - 5 women have held the following government positions: the Deputy Prime Minister (2006), the Minister of Finance (2005-2006), the Minister of Regional Development (2005-2006), the Minister of Foreign Affairs (2006) and the Minister of Labour and Social Policy (2006) which constituted approximately 27% of all ministers - members of government;
 - 4) the coalition government of Law and Justice, the League of Polish Families and Self-defence (July 2006 - November 2007) - 6 women have held the following government positions: the Deputy Prime Minister (2006-2007), the Minister of Foreign Affairs (2006-2007), the Minister of Regional Development (2006-2007), the Minister of Labour and Social Policy (2006-2007), the Minister of Finance (2006-2007) and the Minister of Sport and Tourism (2007), which constituted approximately 27% of all ministers - members of government;
 - 5) the coalition government of the of the Civic Platform and Polish People's Party (November 2007 - November 2011) 5 women have held the following government positions: the Minister of Health, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the Minister of Regional Development, the Minister of National Education and the Minister of Science and Higher Education, which constituted approximately 26% of all ministers - members of government.

As regards the participation of men and women with respect to the position of secretary of state (vice-ministers) and undersecretaries of state in the government administration in years 2002-2010, the statistics are as follows:

Men and women on the positions of secretaries of state (vice-ministers) and undersecretaries of state in the government administration in years 2002-2010:

As at:	Secretaries of State			Undersecretaries of State		
	Number total	Number women	%	Number total	Number women	of %
31.12.2002	24	7	29.1	58	11	18.9
31.12.2003	22	5	22.0	62	11	17.7
31.12.2004	19	2	10.5	61	8	13.1
31.12.2005	25	4	16.0	52	6	11.5
31.12.2006	31	5	16.1	58	9	15.5
31.12.2007	23	3	13.0	59	10	16.9
31.12.2008	26	6	23.0	74	14	18.9
31.12.2009	22	6	27.0	73	14	19.1
31.12.2010	24	4	16.6	64	12	18.7

Source: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Women among Judges

Definition: Judges are justice officers who hear and judge cases in courts of justice, instruct the jury on points of law, or pronounce judgement.

Variable (Total Number)	1995	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Judges	6 899	8 335	9 827	9 922	9 927	9 938	9 906
Judges, women	4 331	5 306	6 217	6 347	6 345	6 346	6 327
Judges, men	2 568	3 029	3 610	3 575	3 582	3 592	3 579
Judges, women %	63%	64%	63%	64%	64%	64%	64%
Judges, men %	37%	36%	37%	36%	36%	36%	36%

The participation of women in governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding

The Minister of State Treasury takes actions aimed at ensuring balanced participation of men and women in the governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding, operating under the supervision of the Ministry of State Treasury, by issuing - within the scope of his competences - internal legal regulations and good practices for entities under his supervision.

On March 7, 2013, the Minister of State Treasury signed a document entitled *Good practices for ensuring balanced participation of men and women in governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding*²⁵. Acting on the basis of the best examples of regulations developed in other European countries as well as the standards of supervision which apply to public companies and taking into account the Community law instruments intended to promote the equal treatment and equal opportunities for men and women in work and employment (Directives 2006/54/EC and 2010/41/EU) as well as the draft directive of the European Parliament and of the Council *on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures* (COM(2012)614 final) being prepared by the European Commission, the Minister of State Treasury recommends the application of good practices in recruitment processes pertaining to the governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding insofar as the application of such good practices is not inconsistent with the provisions of applicable laws.

The application of the principle of balanced participation of men and women with respect to the composition of the bodies in question should ensure that the underrepresented gender attains at least a 30% average share among all members of supervisory boards selected and appointed by the Minister of State Treasury. The current assumptions are that in public and key companies, this value shall be reached by the year 2015. The application of the guidelines in question is particularly recommended for companies with State Treasury shareholding which are quoted on the Warsaw Stock Exchange, since the information available to the Ministry demonstrates that these companies are characterized by a low share of women in supervisory and management boards.

²⁵ Link:

http://nadzor.msp.gov.pl/portals/nad/354/25129/Dobre_praktyki_w_zakresie_zapewnienia_zrownowazonego_udzialu_kobiet_i_mezczyzn_.html

Furthermore, by Order No. 6 of the Minister of State Treasury dated 7.03.2013, the document entitled *Principles of ownership supervision of companies with State Treasury shareholding*²⁶ has been supplemented to include the following provision:

- “selection of adequately prepared supervisory board members, having regard to the balanced participation of men and women, for the purposes of ensuring the proper functioning of the ownership supervision scheme”.

As at January 31, 2014, the share of women among all members of supervisory boards representing the State Treasury in 19 companies with State Treasury shareholding quoted on the Warsaw Stock Exchange and operating under the supervision of the Minister of State Treasury, amounts to 27%.

On the other hand, the share of women among all members of supervisory boards representing the State Treasury in 325 companies with State Treasury shareholding operating under the supervision of the Minister of State Treasury for which supervisory boards have been appointed amounts to 43.0%.

The Citizens’ Initiative Fund Operational Programme

The Citizens’ Initiative Fund was established in 2005 for the purposes of animating and supporting citizens’ initiatives operating with the participation of the non-governmental sector. In years 2008-2013 the Fund operated in two forms: as the Citizens’ Initiative Fund dedicated reserve in 2008 and as the Citizens’ Initiative Fund Operational Programme for years 2009-2013. The Fund derives all of its financing from the state budget.

In 2008, within the framework of action 3 - Human and citizen rights and freedoms, the programme included a support area no. 3 - Women in public and social life. In years 2009-2013, on the other hand, within the framework of priority 1 - Active, conscious citizens and active local communities, support area 7 - Activation of women in public life - has been established. Within both of the above areas of support, eligible entities had the opportunity to implement projects designed for the benefit of women, selected by way of a competition. These projects were mostly aimed at improving the social recognition of women as well as encouraging women to perform significant social roles in the life of the community.

²⁶ Link:

http://bip.msp.gov.pl/download/1/5643/Zasady_nadzoru_wlascielskiego_nad_spolkami_z_udzialem_Skarbu_Pans_twa_06_2013.pdf

Numerical form, detailed information on the support granted within the framework of the Citizens' Initiative Fund

Citizens' Initiative Fund 2008 and Citizens' Initiative Fund Operational Programme 2009-2013					
year	priority	area	offers submitted	offers for which co-financing was granted	amount of subsidy
2008	3	3	27	9	PLN 372 962
2009	1	7	46	12	PLN 926 536
2010	1	7	76	13	PLN 859 783
2011	1	7	74	14	PLN 1 153 154
2012	1	7	67	9	PLN 850 237
2013	1	7	87	12	1063995.25
TOTAL			377	69	PLN 5 226 666

H. Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women

The strategic objectives specified under the Beijing Platform for Action are:

To establish or reinforce national mechanisms and other government authorities; to include the cultural gender identity perspective in all legislative processes and all public strategies, programmes and projects; to create and disseminate data and information files divided according to the cultural gender identity criterion and to disseminate such files for the purposes of situation planning and assessment.

The authorities of the Republic of Poland in charge of equality issues are:

- the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister;
- the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;
- the Ombudsperson for Human Rights.

The Minister of State Treasury takes actions aimed at ensuring balanced participation of men and women in the governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding, operating under the supervision of the Ministry of State Treasury, by issuing - within the scope of his competences - internal legal regulations and good practices for entities under his supervision.

On March 7, 2013, the Minister of State Treasury signed a document entitled *Good practices for ensuring balanced participation of men and women in governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding*. Acting on the basis of the best examples of regulations developed in other European countries as well as the standards of supervision which apply to public companies and taking into account the Community law instruments intended to promote the equal treatment and equal opportunities for men and women in work and employment (Directives 2006/54/EC and 2010/41/EU) as well as the draft directive of the European Parliament and of the Council *on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors*

of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures (COM(2012)614 final) being prepared by the European Commission, the Minister of State Treasury recommends the application of good practices in recruitment processes pertaining to the governing bodies of companies with State Treasury shareholding insofar as the application of such good practices is not inconsistent with the provisions of applicable laws. The application of the principle of balanced participation of men and women with respect to the composition of the bodies in question should ensure that the underrepresented gender attains at least a 30% average share among all members of supervisory boards selected and appointed by the Minister of State Treasury. The current assumptions are that in public and key companies, this value shall be reached by the year 2015. The application of the guidelines in question is particularly recommended for companies with State Treasury shareholding which are quoted on the Warsaw Stock Exchange, since the information available to the Ministry demonstrates that these companies are characterized by a low share of women in supervisory and management boards.

Complaints to the National Labour Inspectorate pertaining to sex-based discrimination with respect to promotion or the allocation of other employment-related benefits

Year	Complaints against sex-based discrimination with respect to promotion or the allocation of other employment-related benefits	Justified complaints	Unjustified complaints	Impossible to determine
2007	3	1	2	0
2008	2	1	1	0
2009	1	0	0	1
2010	5	3	2	0
2011	4	0	3	1
2012	3	1	2	0

Complaints to the National Labour Inspectorate pertaining to sex-based discrimination with respect to the selection for participation in training courses aimed at increasing professional qualifications

Year	Complaints against sex-based discrimination with respect to the selection for participation in training courses aimed at increasing professional qualifications	Justified complaints	Unjustified complaints	Impossible to determine
2007	2	0	2	0
2008	1	0	1	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	1	1	0	0
2011	2	0	1	1
2012	0	0	0	0

The gender mainstreaming principle in projects implemented on the basis of Community financing

In addition, the Polish government complies with the principle of equality between men and women as one of the principles of horizontal EU policies, eliminating all instances of inequality as well as promoting equality between men and women through actions performed within the framework of programmes implemented with the use of structural funds. Particular emphasis is placed on the principle of equal opportunities for men and women - including the elimination of inequalities on the labour market - within the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme 2007-2013 (HC OP), co-financed from the European Social Fund. However, the principle of equal opportunities remains present, first and foremost, in implementation solutions applied in the form of projects within the framework of the HC OP - e.g. actions intended to increase the opportunities for employment, return to the labour market, increasing professional qualifications and acquiring new competences. Particular emphasis has been placed on the increase of the level of employment among women who are, or may be, a disadvantaged group on the labour market. Support in the form of training courses, counselling, funds for business activities as well as various other courses is particularly intended for women returning to the labour market after a break in professional activity caused by pregnancy and childbirth or women whose professional qualifications have become outdated or remain at an insufficient level. In 2009, the Ministry of Regional Development prepared, within the framework of HC OP, *the Agenda for actions for equal opportunities for men and women*. Also in 2009, the *minimum standard* for the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities for men and women was introduced (the standard for the assessment of applications for the co-financing of projects with respect to compliance with the principle of gender equality). Furthermore, a Workgroup for Equal Opportunities for Men and Women at the HC OP has been appointed, its main objective being the initiation of all actions aimed at the promotion of the principle of equal opportunities for men and women within the framework of the HC OP. The EFS good practices competition is held annually; within the framework of this competition, a special category for horizontal policy related to the principle of equal opportunities for men and women has been designated. A guidebook of good practices (both Polish and international) pertaining to equal opportunities for men and women has also been prepared in order to provide potential project leaders with ideas for original and efficient methods for the inclusion of this horizontal policy in their projects.

I. Human rights of women

The strategic objectives specified under the Beijing Platform for Action are:

To promote and protect women's rights, framed as human rights, through the full implementation of all international instruments for the protection of human rights, including, in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; to ensure the equality and non-discrimination of women in both law and practice.

The rule of equality between men and women in Poland is founded on the principle of equality before the law. According to the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland dated April 2, 1997, everyone remains equal before the law. No one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever (article 32). According to article 33 of the Constitution, men and women shall have equal rights in family, political, social and economic life. Men and women shall, in particular, have equal rights with respect to education, employment and promotion, and shall have the right to equal compensation for work of similar value, to social security, to hold offices, and to receive public honours and decorations. This principle is made explicit, in particular, in the Labour Code. The provisions prohibiting discrimination are contained, first and foremost, in chapter II a “Equal treatment in employment”, situated in Chapter One (“General Provisions”) of the Labour Code. Poland’s accession to the European Union in 2004 significantly expedited the process of legal change with respect to equal treatment. The Labour Code is amended on an ongoing basis, in accordance with EU Directives.

The act on the implementation of certain provisions on equal treatment entered into force in January 2011. The act specifies the areas and methods of counteracting infringements of the principle of equal treatment with regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, faith, outlook, disability, age or sexual orientation. It also specifies authorities competent with respect to issues of equal treatment. The performance of tasks pertaining to the implementation of the principle of equal treatment was entrusted to the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and the Ombudsperson. The Ombudsperson performs tasks pertaining to compliance with the principle of equal treatment as an independent authority within the meaning of the provisions of the directive of the Council 2000/78/EC dated November 27, 2000, establishing *a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation*. The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, appointed and dismissed by the Prime Minister, implements government policies in the field of equal treatment. The applicable statutory provisions require the Plenipotentiary to develop a National Action Plan for Equal Treatment, a strategic document which designates the objectives and priorities of government actions for equal treatment, including, in particular, with respect to:

- 1) increasing the social awareness of the issue of equal treatment, including the causes and consequences of violations of the equal treatment principle;
- 2) counteracting violations of the equal treatment principle;
- 3) cooperation with social partners, non-governmental organizations and other entities in the field of equal treatment.

One of the areas which has merited a broad inclusion in the National Action Plan is counteracting gender-based discrimination.

Complaints to the National Labour Inspectorate pertaining to gender-based discrimination with respect to the establishment of an employment relationship

Year	Complaints against sex-based discrimination with respect to the establishment of an employment relationship	Justified complaints	Unjustified complaints	Impossible to determine
2007	17	2	10	5
2008	11	3	7	1
2009	11	1	7	3
2010	12	1	9	2
2011	26	0	14	12
2012	23	2	12	9

Register of claims for damages due to violations of the principle of equal treatment of men and women (article 18^{3d} of the Labour Code) brought before labour courts of first instance during the first half of 2013

Claim brought by:	Cases pending resolution	Resolved	Of which					To be resolved during subsequent period
			complaint allowed in whole or in part	complaint settled	complaint dismissed	complaint returned to claimant	action/complaint rejected	
District courts								
women	244	79	17	5	25	1	-	165
men	337	111	12	6	29	2	1	226
Regional courts								
women	30	9	1	-	4	1		21
men	27	9	4	1		-	-	18

Promotion and popularization of the project and the notion of equality and prevention of all forms of discrimination - Social campaign promoting the concept of equal treatment and prevention of discrimination - “Widzisz? Reaguj!” (“If you see it, react!”)

The objective of the campaign was to draw the attention of the public to the phenomenon of discrimination - including, in particular, discrimination due to gender, age and disability. The primary communication channels used for the campaign were the TV advertisement called “The Eye” and the Equality Network website. The TV advertisement informed which forms of conduct were discriminatory and encouraged witnesses to react, providing a link to the

www.siecznosci.gov.pl website. The website has an educational and information function (recommended events, media). It promotes materials related to tolerance and equal treatment.

J. Women and the media

Within the reporting period, institutions responsible for the implementation of the gender equality policy have performed actions pertaining to counteracting the discrimination of women in the media. The activities of the media in Poland are subject to the provisions of the Advertising Ethics Code, the primary document of the Advertising Council and the Advertising Ethics Commission. The Code applies to all forms of advertising, with social and political campaigns. The Advertising Ethics Code contains detailed provisions prohibiting, inter alia, the following: discrimination due to gender, faith or nationality, excessive usage of elements encouraging acts of violence, taking advantage of the viewer's lack of knowledge or experience or abusing their trust. On a number of occasions, interventions were made related to violations of the dignity of women and presenting women in a stereotypical manner in the press and advertising materials. The activities of the media were also monitored in order to detect potential contraventions of the principle of non-discrimination. Furthermore, promotional and information activities were performed which were related to the image of men and women in the media. For example, in 2004, within the framework of the "*Reinforcement of policies for equal treatment of men and women*" Phare project, a report entitled "*The image of men and women in advertising - analysis of contents*" was published. A number of conferences and competitions were held, including the "*Breaking stereotypes in advertising*" competition designed for advertisers and companies preparing advertising campaigns which break stereotypes, including gender stereotypes.

Within the reporting period, a substantial number of initiatives intended to counteract the stereotypical perception of the roles of men and women was launched. In years 2002-2005, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Men and Women has made efforts directed, among other things, at the elimination of harmful stereotypes in the area of the division of roles between men and women. The Plenipotentiary organised conferences and seminars at both nationwide and international level, prepared publications (leaflets and brochures) and engaged in cooperation with the applicable ministries with respect to all of the issues listed above. The Plenipotentiary also conducted awareness-raising campaigns such as the "Glasses of Equality" awards for individuals, public institutions and the media which have demonstrated a particularly keen eye for issues related to equality; in addition, anti-awards ("Referrals to eye clinic") were also given to those persons and entities who fail to notice the issues in question. The task pertaining to the promotion of the gender equality principle and non-stereotypical presentation of women in mass media, specified in the *National Programme for Women - Stage II for years 2003-2005*, has been implemented, inter alia, within the framework of the "*Reinforcement of policies for equal treatment of men and women*" Phare project. Under the patronage of the Plenipotentiary and in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Council and the Centre for Gender Equality Research of the Roskilde University (Denmark), conferences and training courses were held for representatives of the media; the main topic of the conferences and courses in question were the standards for the equal participation of men and women in the decision-making process in the media as well as issues pertaining to women's rights. In addition,

a research project entitled “*What if a man does it*” was conducted in cooperation with partners from Denmark, Bulgaria and Italy; the project pertained to men who choose a career in professions traditionally perceived as “female” professions, e.g. the nursing profession or elementary education teacher.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has implemented the recommendations of the PPD in the area in question within the framework of projects co-financed by the European Social Fund. A number of television programmes have been produced: reports on successful businesswomen were aired on TVP Channel 2, while Channel 1 featured a series of programmes entitled “The Entrepreneurial Woman”, which touched upon issues such as violence against women, employment of women or reconciling professional and private roles. At the same time, a number of articles were published in the “Przyjaciółka” magazine and on the www.kobieta.gov.pl website. All of the actions referred to above were continued within the framework of projects implemented in years 2008-2011.

The activities of the media in Poland are subject to the provisions of the Advertising Ethics Code, the primary document of the Advertising Council and the Advertising Ethics Commission. The Code applies to all forms of advertising, with the exception of social and political campaigns. The Advertising Ethics Code contains detailed provisions prohibiting, inter alia, the following: discrimination due to gender, faith or nationality, excessive usage of elements encouraging acts of violence, taking advantage of the viewer’s lack of knowledge or experience or abusing their trust.

The “Media of Equal Opportunities” Project

In years 2011-2013, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment implemented the “Media of Equal Opportunities” project. The overall objective of the project is to introduce an equality perspective to the language of public debate through educational and promotional activities aimed at individuals and groups having an influence on the way this language is shaped and responsible for its development. The educational component of the project comprised a series of training programmes aimed at the representatives of nationwide, regional and local media: television and the radio, as well as at journalism students. The series of ten 8-hour meetings allowed a total of two hundred people to receive training. The training courses covered the broadly construed equal treatment issues, equal opportunities and counteracting discrimination. The objective of the training programme has been to increase the level of knowledge and awareness in the area of preventing discrimination and making representatives of the media more sensitive towards the problems faced by discriminated groups. The methodology of the training programme has been designed to take into account and disseminate information on the national and European policies and provisions pertaining to counteracting discrimination and to ensure that participants obtain the skills which allow them to create messages consistent with the principle of equal treatment.

The proportion of women and men at all decision-making levels (levels 1- 4) in media organisations, 2012

		Number of companies	Level 1			Level 2			Level 3			Level 4			TOTAL		
			Percentage		Number of positions												
			Women	Men													
PL	Public	2	0	100	2	0	100	2	36	64	14	36	64	47	34	66	65
	Private	2	0	100	2	0	100	2	26	74	34	26	74	23	25	75	61
	Total	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	29	71	48	33	67	70	29	71	126
EU-27	Public	42	22	78	41	26	74	27	34	66	325	36	64	864	35	65	1257
	Private	54	12	88	51	18	82	50	30	70	403	32	68	504	29	71	1008
	Total	96	16	84	92	21	79	77	32	68	728	34	66	1368	32	68	2265

The proportion of women and men in the decision-making bodies of public and private media organisations, 2012 (including boards)

	Public and private			Public organisations			Private organisations					
	Number of organisations	Percentage of		Number of positions	Number of organisations	Percentage of		Number of positions	Number of organisations	Percentage of		Number of positions
		Women	Men			Women	Men			Women	Men	
PL	4	18	82	33	2	24	76	17	2	13	87	16
EU-27	96	25	75	924	42	29	71	495	54	21	79	429

Women and men on the boards of independent media regulatory authoritiesⁱ

EU-27 and HR	Name of Independent Media Regulatory Authority	Percentage of		Total positions
		Women	Men	
PL	National Broadcasting Council (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji)	0	100	5
EU-27	Total	31	69	213

For more information please visit: <http://eige.europa.eu/content/gender-equality-index#/country/PL>

K. Women and the environment

The UN Climate Change Conference (COP19), Warsaw, November 2013

The purpose of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was to ensure the stabilization of the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at a level which prevents hazardous interference with the Earth's climate system. The fact that women

have now found themselves at the centre of the challenges related to climate change is becoming increasingly obvious. Women are disproportionately more affected by the consequences of climate change such as droughts, floods and other extreme weather conditions, but also play a key role in the efforts aimed at preventing climate change.

During the COP19 Conference in Warsaw, discussion panels related to the issue of the influence of women on the prevention of climate change were held. Workshops were held pertaining to gender balance in the UNFCCC as well as actions in the area of the development of a gender-sensitive climate policy. The actions in question are intended to promote the greater participation of women in the aforementioned processes.

High-level meetings as well as a number of accompanying events devoted to gender equality were held. In addition, the **Vision 50/50: Women for Action on Climate Change** meeting has also taken place, bringing together many influential women and leaders, who have jointly developed a pathway towards sustainable development which allows women to make decisive choices.

Proportion of women in climate change decision-making bodies at the national level in the EU Member States

Percentage of women in high-level positions related to climate change in national ministries competent for environment, transport and energy, by sector, EU 27

	Environment	Transport	Energy	Total
EU 27	33.9	20.2	17.3	25.6
Poland	61.5	35.7	12.5	40.0

Proportion of female tertiary graduates of all graduates (ISCED levels 5 and 6) in natural sciences and technologies at the EU and Member States level

Proportion of female tertiary graduates of all graduates (ISCED levels 5 and 6) in natural sciences in the EU and Member States level, 2005-2009

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EU 27	52.6	53.7	55.0	55.2	54.0
Poland	70.2	68.6	69.2	70.7	69.0

For more information please visit: <http://eige.europa.eu/content/gender-equality-index#/country/PL>

L. The girl-child

Education in Poland is based upon the principles contained in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In accordance with the constitutional principles (articles 32 and 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland), which provide that no one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever and that men and women shall have equal rights in family, political, social and economic life in the Republic of Poland, including, in particular the equal right to education, with the educational system in Poland providing equal access to education at all levels of the educational process.

From the 1999/2000 school year, the reform of the educational system has been implemented in subsequent stages. As a result, the system now consists of a six-year primary school, three-year lower-secondary school as well as upper-secondary schools, with the latter group comprising three-year general or specialized secondary schools, four-year secondary technical schools, three-year special vocational training schools as well as two-year supplementary general secondary schools, three-year supplementary secondary technical schools, basic vocational schools and post-secondary schools. Within the reporting period, access to education was equal for both men and women with respect to vocational schools.

Promotion and protection of girls' rights: examples of actions:

The “Girls as Engineers!” campaign is the first and, so far, the most extensive project aimed at the promotion of technical, engineering and scientific studies among young women. The campaign is a joint initiative of the Perspektywy (Perspectives) Educational Foundation and the Conference of Rectors of Polish Technical Universities. In 2014 the 5th edition of the campaign was held.

“Girls As Engineers!” is an integrated campaign initiated by Perspektywy Educational Foundation and the Conference of Rectors of Polish Technical Universities. The main aim of the campaign is to introduce technical and engineering studies to female high school students and to promote this educational path as interesting, attractive and very beneficial in the long run. It is also to show that technical studies programs address a recognized need for business and industry to attract highly trained workers with a variety of skills.

Each year, the number of individuals expressing interest in this campaign has been increasing - not only among students of upper-secondary schools, facing the choice as to further paths of education, but also among lower-secondary school students. The objective of this campaign is to break the stereotypes in mentality and to encourage the female graduates of upper-secondary schools to study engineering-related subjects, including strictly technical studies. Within the framework of this campaign, the share of women on faculties and departments on Polish public technological educational institutions is analyzed. In the 2012/2013 academic year, a total of 306.5 thousand individuals studied at the 16 Polish public technological educational institutions, with women amounting to 36% of this number. In the 2007/2008 academic year, the share of women studying at the institutions referred to above barely exceeded 30%. More information in item B - Women in education and training.

The “I am the boss” competition

In order to encourage female students of upper-secondary schools to develop their leadership skills, from 2010 onwards the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and the Minister of National Education have held an annual competition entitled “I am the boss”. The objective of

the competition is to break the stereotypes pertaining to women and authority as well as to promote a positive image of women leaders among young people. The competition is intended to encourage female students of upper-secondary schools to take on leadership roles and to continue their education as well as to aim - in a longer perspective - for top positions in the world of business, science and politics both in Poland and in other European countries. Winners of the competition have the opportunity to participate in a special development programme which comprises training courses, workshops, meetings with women performing key functions in the world of business, media and politics as well as study tours. Until the year 2013, 4 editions of the competition have been held, with 80 winners of the competition participating in the development programme.

Section Three: Data and statistics

- a) Has a core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality been established? If so, please provide the indicators in an annex.

Within the framework of the National Action Plan for Equal Treatment adopted in December 2013, the Central Statistical Office has made plans to develop a set of key indicators which shall make it possible to monitor the situation of groups which are at risk of discrimination. Taking into account the fact that women are one of the main groups which benefit from the protection of anti-discrimination laws, gender-based indicators shall be developed; the data in question will be prepared systematically, every 4 years. The first publication of the indicators in question is scheduled for 2016.

- b) Has data collection and compilation on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators begun, which was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013? (The link to the list of indicators is provided in Part III.)

The Central Statistical Office has performed an analysis of the collected and published data with regard to the possibility of developing, for domestic purposes, a minimum set of indicators aimed at monitoring the situation of men and women. Many of the indicators specified by the UN, including those which belong to the first group, are already used and published in our country in the Statistical Yearbook or along with results of individual research programmes.

- c) Has data collection and compilation on the nine indicators on violence against women, as agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013, begun? (The list of indicators is provided in Part III).

The Central Statistical Office does not currently carry out surveys which would make it possible to calculate the indicators recommended by the UN with respect to violence against women. Poland had made preparations for the implementation of the European Safety Survey; however, following the decision of the European Parliament to discontinue this survey on the EU level, the Central Statistical Office, within the framework of its methodological operations, has carried out a pilot survey which included a victimization module. The quality of the material obtained is

currently being analysed. Conclusions and recommendations pertaining to the survey on violence shall be presented in the form of a report in the second quarter of 2014.

- d) What processes have been undertaken to collect data on the situation of particular groups of women, such as rural women, older women, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women living with HIV and AIDS, or other groups? Please describe briefly.

Please refer to point b.

Section Four: Emerging priorities

- a) What are the key priorities for action over the next three to five years for accelerating implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and subsequent intergovernmental agreements for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national level?

The biggest challenges since 1995, when the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted and since 2009, when the last periodic review was taken in this regard and now in 2014 are:

Counteracting gender based violence:

Counteracting discrimination based on gender which may result in its most extreme forms such as violence against women. Government and NGO organizations are undertaking various measures such as national action plans, raising awareness campaigns etc., but the problem doesn't resolve – it is even growing, because women are getting more and more aware of their rights and are willing to report cases of violence to relevant authorities such as the police or persecutor offices.

More information: see page 7 onwards.

Ensuring economic independence and combating gender discrimination on the labour market.

Another problem is that a significant number of women in Poland are not economically independent. Most of the time they receive lower salaries than men in the same positions – the problem of gender pay gap is a serious concern of Polish government. Women tend to occupy lower profile jobs in healthcare, public administration, education and in services, which results in vertical and horizontal segregation on the labour market due to gender stereotypes and causes phenomena such as glass ceiling or sticky floor. Low employment rate among women is also due to lack of childcare. There is a lack of day care and play schools which would be accessible and affordable for parents. That's why Polish government in the last few years not only has changed

the law, in order to improve the situation, but also ensured state money for programs such as “Maluch” to create day cares centres. Also the implementation of system solutions in the field of reconciliation of professional, family and private life is being widely popularized among employers and employees. As a result the government adopted the law which introduced 100% paid and non-transferable father leaves in order to encourage fathers to take active part in raising children.

More information: see page: 11 onwards.

Increase political participation of women in decision making:

The average rate of participation of Polish women in the parliament was about 20 % by 2011 – last election. It has been proven by various research groups that in order to make an influence, it has to be at least 30 % of a given population. We hope that election of 2015 will improve the situation significantly, because in in 2009, a citizens’ bill on gender quotas on electoral lists was adopted.

The bill was put forward to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland as a consequence of the activity of the Congress of Women – the largest social movement of women. Following work on the bill after the reporting period, the Act of 5 January 2011 on amending the Act – Electoral Regulations to Gmina Councils, Powiat Councils and Regional Councils, Act – Electoral Regulations to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and the Senate of the Republic of Poland and the Act – Electoral Regulations to the European Parliament (Dz. U. No 34, item 172) (the so-called Quota Act) entered into force on 3 March 2011.

The Act amended the electoral regulations to the Sejm, the European Parliament and local government authorities (gmina, powiat) and regional councils. According to the Act, the percentage of female and male candidates on electoral lists to these authorities may not fall below 35%. Should a list fail to meet the gender quota, it will not be registered. For the first time in Poland it has been possible to introduce legal regulations that guarantee a specific percentage share of women on electoral lists. Before 2009, bills put forward to the Sejm that pertained to introducing the gender quota were not accepted (they were rejected at the first reading). As a result of the quota law 24% of women joined the lower chamber of the Polish parliament (highest score in the history) and 12% entered the upper chamber – the Senat.

Increase social and public activity of women:

Between 2009-2013 the Polish Congress of Women was taking place each year. The Congress of Women was founded in June 2009 as a social movement aimed at social and political activation of women in Poland. The point of departure were actions accompanying the organisation of the 1st Congress of Women, i.e. a convention of over 4 thousand women from all over the country who discussed women’s contribution to the history of the last 20 years in Poland. It was a women counter-initiative to the official celebrations of 20th anniversary of the fall of communism in Poland, where participants were mainly men. The Congress concluded with the

drafting of a number of demands, one of the most significant of which was the introduction of gender quotas on electoral lists. Congress participants actively sought to fulfil this demand as well as to introduce the subject of gender quotas to public debate. A bill on gender quotas was drafted and put forward to the Sejm as a citizens' bill and adopted in 2011. 3rd European Congress of Women was organised in 2011 during the Polish Presidency of the EU Council with a Round Table for ministers in charge of gender equality in the European Union: main topics of discussion were: reconciliation of work and family life, gender pay gap and scheduled for 9 of May 2014: women on boards. The Polish government is a partner of the Congress – relevant ministries such as the Ministry of labour or Science always organize panel discussion related to their portfolio. Also women in armed forces are not only represented, but also have their own special panel. The presence of the President of Republic of Poland and the First Lady, as well as the Prime Minister and relevant ministers is ensured and they evoke main challenges of Polish women.

Annexes to national reviews

In addition to relevant information not covered elsewhere, the annexes to the national reviews should contain the following:

- information on the process of preparing the national review, including an indication of which Government departments and institutions were involved, and consultations held with stakeholders

National Action Plan for Equal Treatment for years 2013-2016 was subject to broad interministerial and public consultations (including consultations with non-governmental organizations).

Link: <http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/aktualnosci/krajowy-program-dzialan-na-rzecz-rownego-traktowania-na-lata-2013-2016>

- detailed statistical information, as applicable, on the overall trends discussed in section one, and on all critical areas of concern discussed in section two
http://stat.gov.pl/gus/5840_5938_ENG_HTML.htm
http://stat.gov.pl/gus/5840_3816_ENG_HTML.htm
- case studies/good practice examples of policies and initiatives implemented in any of the critical areas of concern, not included elsewhere

- Report Leveraging Training: Skills development in SMEs, Poland 2010 (OECD)

<http://www.efs.gov.pl/analizyraportypodsumowania/documents/report%20oecd%20smes%20eng.%20version.pdf>

in Polish:

- information on the „Equal Treatment as a Good Governance Standard - Research Report”

http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/sites/default/files/rowne_traktowanie_standardem_dobrego_rzadzenia_-_raport_z_badan_ilosowych_ost_0_0.pdf

+ website:

<http://www.siecrownosci.gov.pl/o-projekcie/>

- information on the project pertaining to the equality of men and women in the process of economic decision-making:

<http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/projekt-rownosc-kobiet-i-mezczyzn-w-procesach-podejmowania-decyzji-ekonomicznych-narzedziem-zmiany>

- information on the “I am the boss” competition

<http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/aktualnosci/edycje-konkursu-jestem-szefowa>

- information on the implementation of the project pertaining to the rights of victims of sexual offences

http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/sites/default/files/progress_na_www_zlogo2_0.pdf

- the diversity charter

<http://www.kartaroznorodnosci.pl/pl>

- information on the “Media of Equal Opportunities” project

<http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/media-rownych-szans>

- information and reports pertaining to projects initiated within the framework of the OP HC

<http://www.efs.gov.pl/analizyraportypodsumowania/strony/opracowania.aspx>

- analyses and reports on OP HC projects

<http://www.efs.gov.pl/AnalizyRaportyPodsumowania/Strony/default.aspx#strona=1&zakladka=1&strona=1&zakladka=3>

- a list of policies, strategies, action plans and publications, with links to their location

In Polish:

http://rownetraktowanie.gov.pl/sites/default/files/krajowy_program_dzialan_na_rzecz_rownego_traktowania_przyjety_na_rm_10.12.13.pdf