

**Questionnaire to Governments on Implementation of the Beijing
Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the
General Assembly (2000)**

**For preparation of regional review and appraisals
in the context of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing
Declaration and Platform for Action in 2010**

Extract from the national action plan "Government priorities and procedures for the enforcement of the equality of men and women"- the national action plan was approved by the Government resolution No. 453 of 12 May 2004, No. 533 of 4 May 2005, No. 509 of 02 May 2006, No. 762 of 11 June 2007, No. 540 of 14 May 2008

and from the materials on the fulfilment of the national action plan "Government priorities and procedures for the enforcement of equal opportunities for women and men" for the year 2008 as approved by the members of the government

Part I.

Major overall achievements and obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action.

Czech Republic adopted in 1998, on the basis of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 in Beijing, the National Action Plan entitled "Government priorities and procedures for the enforcement of the equality of men and women." This National Action Plan contains a set of measures whose fulfilment the government evaluates on annual basis and on the basis of this evaluation it updates these measures in accordance with the attained status and the proclaimed goals.

Despite the efforts leading to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action there remain in the Czech Republic certain differences in the station of the men and the women. One of the problems is a low representation of the women in the leading positions in terms of public life which results in low proportion of women in the decision-making and planning processes related to the public and political life and which eventually influences the unequal standing of the women in the society. The competent officers of the government will pay special attention to the solution of this problem throughout the year.

Czech Republic possesses built-up basic institutional structures which assist in pushing through of the equal opportunities policies for men and women and it continues developing them. It is necessary to raise the awareness of the public of the need to resolve the problem of equal opportunities for women and men. The gender stereotypes persist, whether in relation to the station of the men or women in the society, work or in the family life.

Significant differences continue to exist in the degree of involvement of the men as opposed to women on the job market, differences pertaining to the employment of the men and women, in pay provided. Despite the high level of education reached by many of the Czech women their pay reach approximately 80% of the pay achieved by the men. These differences are caused especially by the horizontal and vertical segregation on the job market. Differences in pay further influence the financial security of the women and men in

retirement, where due to the lower pensions the living standards of the women drop rather significantly in comparison with the living standards of the men. The differences in the application on the job market, in the salary differentiation and the existence of the horizontal and the vertical segregation result in a material influence on the phenomena of feminization of poverty. The problem of the entire society is also the harmonization of the working and family life. Lack of public services or their inaccessibility due to financial reasons often complicate the return of the caregivers (i.e. mostly of the women) back on the job market and as such, in most of the cases, these negatively influence the living standards and generally the standing of the women not only on the job market.

Czech Republic took many steps in the recent years to combat all forms of violence committed against women. It is obvious, having the detailed knowledge of the situation in the Czech Republic, that domestic violence between partners is, due to the intimate character of the relationship between the aggressor and the victim and due to use of sophisticated forms of maltreatment, the most complicated in terms of prevention and combating such violence committed against women.

Taking into account the above described facts and with a view to the development of these issues within the European Union it is necessary to consider the aim of equal opportunities for women and men to be one of the priorities of the Czech politics. The coordination of the agenda of equal opportunities for women and men is since 1. 1. 2008 in the hands of the Minister for Human Rights and Minorities. Among the primary goals of this agenda belong the implementation and realization of the equal opportunity concepts for women and men which contains the fundamental measures seeking to create equal opportunities for women and for the men. The issues arising in connection with equal opportunities for women and the men is multidisciplinary, which requires the cooperation among various public administration bodies, social partners, local governments, non-profit organizations, research institutions and other subjects, and last but not least. of the citizens themselves, keeping in mind the common goal which is the removal of any inequalities within our society. The material phase preceding the achievement of the above proclaimed goals at this and upcoming periods is the increase in the numbers of women on decision-making positions which should strengthen the potential of the women in terms of influencing the public life.

Part II.

Specific examples of achievements, including policy development, legislative change, advocacy, awareness-raising, capacity-development and programmes and projects which they have undertaken on implementation in the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action

The activities of the Czech Republic are detailed primarily in the summary reports on the fulfilment of the National Action Plan for the equal opportunities of women and men which are available at (<http://www.vlada.cz/cz/clenove-vlady/ministri-pri-uradu-vlady/michael-kocab/default.htm>), and from which, for instance, we quote:

In 2004 Czech Republic commissioned, acting through the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs research seeking to map in detail the gender structures in power and decision-making structures; this research was realized thanks to a grant provided by the government and the title of the research was “Analysis of the low number of men in political decision-making functions.” The research was undertaken by the Sociology Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. The research discovered that in the top political life in the Czech Republic, on regional and district level, as well as within the justice the Czech society wrestles with significant gender segregation. The masculine character of the Czech political scene is mirrored not only in its day-to-day functioning but also in the norms of conduct and behaviour as well as in the interaction mechanisms.

In the area of education there have been many events held in the Czech Republic, for instance in the second half of 2004 a seminar was held at the Ministry of Justice for its employees, in cooperation with the Equal Opportunity Section of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which focused on the general principles and basic terminology in the field of equal opportunities between men and women. During this seminar the individual aspects connected with this issue were presented and the fundamental terminology was explained. On October 14 and 15, 2004 there was a seminar, organized within the bilateral cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and France, which addressed equal opportunities between men and women and where the French experts presented their practical experiences in the area of equal opportunities for women and men.

The process of education of the officers of state in the area of equal opportunities for women and men, including the information on the methods of the gender mainstreaming, is taking place continuously in all departments. The educational activities in the area of equal opportunities may utilize a free e-learning course.

In the Czech Republic all fields of education are equally accessible to men and women. The situation in many fields, where men were formerly predominant, is positively changing in terms of more girls enrolling for such studies. As an example the fields of general education and courses in police education can be mentioned.

An improved application for the women on the job market is also assisted by the project organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Youth entitled UNIV (i.e. a new method of acknowledgement of knowledge and skills attained in practice), which is financed from the European Social Fund and from the Czech state budget, and which was put into place by the National Institution of Technical and Vocational Education (NUOV). The pilot project, which ran its course by 31. 7. 2008, verified the creation of the network of

the middle- and higher-level schools which functioned as local centres for lifelong learning. In these schools various further education programs were created which were directed at acknowledgement of those skills and competences which the participants acquired outside the course of regular school attendance. The system of procedures for the verification and official acknowledgment of competences is being created which will allow the applicants who wish to obtain an official confirmation that they are competent in a particular field to acquire such confirmation even though they have not studied such field directly. Thanks to this system the people who do not work in the field they originally trained for and who wish to find another job (a second chance), or who could not enter a trade due to missing qualification, will be given an opportunity to better apply themselves on the job market, as the programs for further education follow the needs of the applicants as well as the needs of the employers. All education programs taking place within the framework of UNIV are designated for both sexes, and some of them are created primarily for women, for instance for women who are about to return to the job market after parental leave or after other lengthier periods, or for women living in rural locations and similar.

On November 23, 2004 Czech Republic held a conference, organized under the auspices Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the European Union within the framework of the Community Program related to the Framework Strategy of the Community on the equality between the women and the men, which focused on the equality issues. The Conference on the Equality of Women and Men was intended for the public sector employees and arranged for the essential familiarization with the issues of equality between women and men (subordinating all conceptual, decision-making and evaluating procedures processes in all phases of their preparation and implementation to the perspective of equal opportunities for women and men – gender mainstreaming, and budgeting from the view of equal opportunities for women and men – gender budgeting).

In 2006 there took place the already fifth lecture cycle – entitled “Equal Standing for Men and Women” which was designated for participation of the decision-makers, conceptual and other expert personnel at the Ministry of Defence. The lectures focused on the European legislation and practice in the area of equal positions of women and men and their practical projection into the Czech body of law (lectures were given by the head of the Equal Opportunities Section of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) and on the preparation of the NATO regulation on the participation of women in foreign military missions (lectures were given by the permanent delegate of the Czech Army in the Committee on Women in the NATO Forces). The lecture cycle was attended by 50 competent employees. The invitation to participate in the cycle was extended to the representatives of the Czech and Moravian Association of Defence Department Employees and to the Independent Association of the Ministry of Defence Employees.

The Equal Opportunities Section at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Government Commissioner for Human Rights held in 2006 a public information campaign entitled “Stop to the Stereotypes.” This campaign was carried out on the basis of the government resolution No. 1611 dated 14 December 2005. The goal of this public information campaign was to address the public, to promote public discussion and to clearly declare the need to overcome the existing gender stereotypes. The campaign was focussed primarily on the field of employment, family and the administration of public matters. The employment field focused on the hitherto non-traditional areas for employment of both women and men, and on the access of the women to the managerial functions. The areas pertaining to the family life focussed on the balance between the roles of the women and

men and the public administration was focussed on the participation of the women in decision-making and management. The campaign has a long-term character.

In 2007 Czech Republic organized, in cooperation with the TAIEX Agency of the European Commission, an international seminar on the implementation of EC legislation in the field of equal opportunities for women and men. The goal of the seminar was to strengthen the awareness of equal opportunities for women and men and their legislative regulation, especially among the legal experts. The seminar was positively received and especially the lady judges expressed interest in further similar actions which would focus on the EC legislation, especially in the area of case law pertaining to the equal opportunities.

In 2006 there also took place the project Advocating equality between the women and the men with special focus on social partners – implementation of equal treatment at the workplace. The project aimed to bring education and raise awareness in terms of equal opportunities for women and men in employment, especially in collective bargaining and equal pay (seminars, manuals, information campaign). The target group were the trade unions and the employers. The project was realized with the help of German experts and was completed in January 2007 by a conference.

In September of 2006, a project was launched in the Czech Republic, which originated from the Community program of the European Union for the equality of women and men, and which was entitled “Budgeting for equality between women and men in practice.” The project took place over a 15-month period. The project had an international character, as it was realized by the Czech Republic, Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria. The project was focused on awareness-raising and educational activities (seminars, manuals and information campaign). The target group were the officers of the municipalities, their boards of representatives and the wide public on local level.

Czech Republic participated in 2006, through its Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, as one of the international partners in the Community program of the European Union for the equality of women and men entitled “The Role of Men in Promoting Equality Between Women and Men.” The project took place within the call published by the European Commission to submit proposals for projects from the Community program related to the s Framework Strategy of the Community on the equality between the women and the men. The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights realized the project; the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Luxembourg Ministry for Equal Opportunities participated as its international partners. The task of the project was to seek answers to the questions whether the men can fully realize themselves on the field of the working, family and personal life, and what guarantees are provided to men by the legislation of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Luxembourg in these terms, in what extent the men take up these opportunities or, potentially, why they do not take them up. Czech Republic participated in the project by providing the results of the research among the men on parental leave and the legal and sociologic analysis of the situation in the Czech Republic. The project was brought to a close by a conference on the subject – The Tasks of the Fathers in Promoting Equality between Genders.

Furthermore, on May 4, 2006 a press conference was held which addressed the cycle of documentaries entitled “Father like a mother.” A press release pertaining to the documentaries was issued on May 3, 2006. The relevant information and the video recording continue to be available at the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Czech Republic also continued in 2006 in the *European Initiative EQUAL*, in the *Operational Programme for the development of human resources* and in the *Uniform program document for Target 3* which all fall under the employment policies of the European Union; these are financed by the European Social Fund and aim to increase and improve employment. Their main tasks are to promote equal access to employment, to develop and verify procedures stamping out discrimination and inequalities on the job market. The initiative is financed in the Czech Republic by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs which is responsible for its realization and from the EU funds.

Furthermore, Czech Republic participated on the following international programmes – Community program AGIS, whose topical priorities include protection of the rights of victims, Phare Twinning Project CZ03/IB/JH/03 “Strengthening the fight against the trafficking of Human Beings,” and on the education program project “Trafficking with Human Beings.” In May 2006, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, a regional conference was held for the Immigration and Border Police employees which focused on the identification of human traffic at the border, Daphne II, e-Europe 2005, a program promoting information society, Transition Facility, operational program Infrastructure, European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development.

One of the important events of 2006 was the defence of the 3rd periodical report of the Czech Republic on the implementation of the “*UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*” (CEDAW). The defence took place on August 17, 2006 in New York and was attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Government Commissioner for Human Rights. The committee especially praised the National Action Plan for the Equality of Women and Men. The committee also expressed its concern with the low number of women in high elected posts (such as in the Parliament), in the government, state and diplomatic service and in international organizations, with the high degree of violence against women, including domestic violence and human trafficking and with the lower pay which is provided to women in comparison to the incomes attained by men.

The Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was the initiator of the project entitled “Analysis of the access of migrants of both genders to the job market and education in the Czech Republic.” The project took place between December 2006 and June 2007 and its main goals were: 1. analysis of relevant documentation and studies devoted to the issues being monitored; 2. representative survey among the communities from third countries in the interest of acquiring information on the access of female and male migrants to the job market and to education in the Czech Republic; 3. analysis of absorption capacity of the relevant subject which assist in prevention of discrimination or removing of inequalities in access of female and male migrants to the job market and education; 4. proposals of measures leading to the removal and elimination of the discovered inequalities, both in terms of gender, in the form of a policy paper and its publication, and a concluding seminar. The output of the project is the material entitled “Access of female and male migrants to job market and education” (which is available in the Czech language at <http://www.cizinci.cz/clanek.php?lg=1&id=484>), and which summarizes the results of the survey and proposes measures for optimization of the integration of migrants in relevant sectors. The publication also contains the list of all NGOs which are active in the field of integration of foreigners. Another of the outputs of the analysis is the list of projects pertaining to the integration of foreigners which are funded by the ESF.

Under the auspices of the Minister for Human Rights and Minorities a number of seminars and conferences was held in 2007 which involved non-governmental organizations (such as the conference entitled “Helping Entry of Women into Politics: The Potential of Positive Measures” which was organized by the civil association Forum 50%).

The Minister for Human Rights and Minorities took part in 2007 in a public discussion on the equal opportunities for women and men with special focus on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All 2007. The goal of the EU initiative was to raise awareness of the public with respect to the anti-discrimination legislation put forward by the EU and to promote a balanced reflection on all reasons for discrimination, including gender. Within the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All an international conference was held, entitled “Let’s not fear Quotas! Promotion of the Entry of Women into Politics: Potential Application.” The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All was realized with the financial contribution from the EU and from the state budget, the events taking place within this initiative were accompanied by press conferences which were often attended in person by the Minister for Human Rights and Minorities.

Between the years 2005 – 2008 the non-profit organization Gender Studies, o. p. s. was commissioned, and co-financed by the European Social Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic, to coordinate the organization of two joint projects entitled “Půl na půl” [Half and Half] under the EU EQUAL programme. These projects aimed to balance the inequalities present on the job market. Within the project various information activities took place, as well media activities, research activities, education, consulting and lobbying activities. Project “Office of the year” organized under the umbrella of the Half and Half initiative – respect to equal opportunities, monitors and promotes equal opportunities implementation in local administration offices.

Under this program Czech Republic also took part in the project promoting equality between men and women which focussed on the Central European territories and in which Slovakia and Austria also participated. Within the framework of the PHARE program project was completed in January 2007, in cooperation with the German partners, promoting of equality between women and men which focussed on the social partners – introduction of equal treatment principles at the workplace. The Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs also took over, as the governing body, the European Social Fund (ESF) Community Initiative EQUAL – and, among other, organized in November 2007 in Prague the second Annual Conference for the programme where the successes achieved within the individual projects were presented.

Czech Republic, acting through its Ministry of Interior, has acted as a patron of two international projects entitled “Transnational Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking in Source and Target Countries,” which is coordinated by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development. The goal of the project is the interlinking of the existing national coordinating mechanisms which serve for the purposes of protection and assistance to the victims of human trafficking, unification of standards of the services provided to the victims and primarily in strengthening of the international and bilateral cooperation in the spheres of repatriation and re-integration of the victims. The main output of this project will be the formulation of the principles for care for victims of human trafficking and their return to the source country. The patron of the project is Italy, besides the Czech Republic, other countries such as Portugal, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Hungary, Macedonia take part, as well as a number of non-profit organizations. ICMPD is responsible for the implementation of

the entire project. The anticipated duration of the project is 18 months (running from May 2008 until October 2009). The second project is entitled “Data Collection and Harmonized Information Systems.” The goal of this project is the creation of common criteria for data collection and information on human trafficking, creation of the institutionalized system for such data collection including creation of one unified database, both for the purposes of an analysis and description of the situation and also for the purposes of potential reactions to actual situations and for preparation of strategic plans. The project was submitted by Portugal along with the ICMPD (International Centre for Migration Policy Development), and other partners which include, besides Czech Republic, also Poland, Slovakia and Germany.

Within the Czech subsidy programs there are a number of projects which are supported in order to promote equal opportunities for women and men under the European Social Fund framework. Within the framework of the Operational Programme Development of Human Resources one of the measures (Measure 2. 2) was directly aimed at equal opportunities for women and men on the job market. Within the other priorities the horizontal theme of equal opportunities was applied across-the-board – especially in relation to securing equal access to the activities of the project. Under Measure 2. 2. of the Operational Programme Development of Human Resources aid was provided to 53 projects and contract were concluded in the total amount of CZK 310 944 979.50. Projects with regional impact, focussed on the support to the specific targets groups were supported as well as projects which sought to systematically raise awareness of the entire public.

Czech Republic continues, in compliance with its international obligations and commitments, to promote implementation of the principle of equal opportunities for women and men and in combating the discrimination by legislative action. The fundamental legal framework has been established in the Czech Republic and such is presently being fine-tuned.

Elimination of all forms of violence committed against women is one of the priorities of the Czech Republic. In the Czech Republic the domestic violence was, from the viewpoint of criminal law prior to 2004, prosecuted as a criminal offences of battery– bodily harm, violence against a specific population group or individuals, interference with individual freedoms, rape or extortion. Since 1 June 2004 the Penal Code acquired a new criminal offence defined as “torture of persons sharing one household,” which is aimed directly against the offenders committing domestic violence. Initiation of criminal prosecution arising from suspected perpetration of this criminal offence does not require, in cases where the aggressor is a close [intimate with the] person in relation to the victim, the consent of the victim.

The breaking point in the prevention of domestic violence became the Act No. 135/2006 Coll. which, effective as of 1 January 2007, amend certain laws in the sphere of protection against domestic violence and which newly establishes the institution of the so-called ejecting of the wrongdoer from the household he/she shares with the victim. The institute of ejection is carried out by the police on the spot without regard to the opinion or agreement of the endangered person as a preventive action against dangerous conduct of a violent individual with a view to minimize the risk of future attacks. An individual may be so ejected by the police for ten days. That should create a sufficient room for the endangered person to clear up any potential further steps on the basis / with the help provided by the local intervention centre. The new Act further anticipates that the victim will be entitled to seek a preliminary order to eject the aggressor from the shared household, to seek that the aggressor is banned from remaining in certain previously defined locations, and to ban the aggressor

from seeking contact with the victim. Such preliminary order may be extended from one month to one year.

On 19 June 2008 the Constitutional Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament approved the proposal tabled by the Minister of Justice to amend the New Penal Code in a way which would insert into its Section 352 “stalking” as a criminal offence.

One of the fundamental pre-requisites for an effective functioning of the prevention of domestic violence was the creation of the intervention centres. Following the amendment of the Act No. 108/2006 Coll., On Social Services, an independent type of service called Intervention Centre was established by the Section 60a of the Act. The Intervention Centres provide assistance to the endangered persons within the first 48 hours after the delivery of the copy of the ejection notice to the Centre. The services in the Centre are provided in the form of outpatient, terrain or in-patient service, and the essential activities provided within these services are socio-therapeutical, legal – enforcement or rights and protection of legitimate interests, and in connection with the purveyance of personal matters. One of the priorities of the Czech subsidy programs are also the social prevention services. On the territory of the Czech Republic there are registered, as of 31. 12. 2008, a total of 87 asylum homes for parents with children (operating under the Section 57 of the Act No. 108/2006 Coll., On Social Service).

In order to resolve various issues related to domestic violence there has been established in 2003 an ad hoc working group, under the auspices of the Czech Government Commissioner for Human Rights, which is comprised of the representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Equal Opportunities Section), Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and of the non-governmental non-profit organizations which are involved in combating the domestic violence. One of the events of this group was a campaign aimed at prevention specifically among the young people between 15 and 25 years of age; this event ran from 1 October 2003 into 2004. The fundamental message conveyed to this age group, which is essential in creating the first relationships, was a clear NO to the initial symptoms of domestic violence. Young people were induced by the campaign to find out the basic data pertaining to domestic violence and to learn to spot its symptoms in the initial stages of any relationship. At the same time, it was communicated to them that any relationship in which one of the partners would be inclined to use violence is best terminated at its very outset. Taking into account the age of the target group the campaign chose also some of the less traditional forms – a computer game, where the young people could experience domestic violence in a virtual relationship and learn how to correctly react to such situations.

The media image of the campaign (graphics, spots etc.) was prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Equal Opportunities Section), the Czech Government Commissioner for Human Rights supervised the production and distribution of the promotional and information materials and other promotional events.

Within the framework of this continuing campaign in 2005 the English version of the education program / game entitled “Game over,” was created, which is used as a contribution of the Czech Republic into various international projects combating domestic violence. The campaign continued in the fall of 2005 and ran into 2006. The decision was taken to redistribute the newly printed information materials to high schools and to continue the information campaign through provision of information to high school students throughout

the Czech Republic. The theme of equality between the sexes was also recommended to be addressed by the high school teachers who could, using the computer game Game Over, in natural form inform the students on the issues of equality between women and men. The form of the information campaign was thoroughly discussed with the representatives of non-governmental and non-profit organizations, some of which also participated in the distribution of the related information materials (White Circle of Safety).

The amendment of the Civil Rules of Procedure was completed during the course of 2008. This proposal amends those provisions of the CRP which related to preliminary orders and measures (i.e. specifically in relation to Section 76b which regulates court orders connected with domestic violence) and the execution of the order to eject aggressor from shared household and preventing contact with the protected individuals. Some of the changes which this amendment brings significantly contribute to the prevention of the domestic violence and to the better protection of its victims. The CPR also completed the legislative process and underwent another amendment which took effect on 1.10.2008 which approaches the children as a separate human being with its own desires and opinions. As a result, the judges should pay more attention to the opinions of the children themselves.

Since August 2008 the coordination activities related to the integration processes for foreigners in the Czech Republic has been in the hands of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, on the basis of government resolution No. 979/2008 (formerly this agenda was in the sphere of action of the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs); the Ministry reflects the principles of equal opportunities for women and men– female immigrants and male immigrants. The report on the realization of the Concept for Integration of Foreigners in 2008, which the Ministry of Interior submitted to the government on 31.1.2009, imposes application of integration measures in 2009 also to the newcomers – foreigners of both sexes who have legal residence in the Czech Republic (for instance for the purposes of family unification). During the initial courser the immigrants will be made familiar with the values observed by the Czech society and the EU: with the principles of democracy with the stress on equality between the men and the women, on the dignity of a human being and on the protection of human rights. Special attention will be paid to the integration of the second and third generation of immigrants, i.e. to the integration of the children and youth from immigrant communities, and to the provision of childcare services to the parents during their participation in the integration activities. From the perspective of the legislation being prepared – in the proposal for the amendment of the Directive 2003/9/EC, which has been submitted by the European Commission in the fall of 2008 – there are newly mentioned the so-called persons with special needs, which include pregnant women and those persons who were subject to some form of psychical and physical violence. The proposal of this Directive imposes on the member states the obligation to provide these persons with special care for the duration of proceedings on granting of international protection. The women should be paid special attention, especially in cases of arrest/detention. The proposal also imposes on the member states the obligation to adopt necessary measures which will prevent violence committed against women on the basis of unequal approach to men and women in asylum centers.

The Czech state organs issued during the monitored period a number of publications, leaflets and other information which aimed to raise the awareness among the public in relation to the issues related to equal opportunities for women and men, such as:

- Statistical year-book – Focus on Women, Focus on Men (annual publication)
- Information Methodology – budgeting promoting equality for women and men,

- Information Methodology - Gender Budgeting (English version of the above),
- Statistical Bulletin - Women and Men in Data 2005, Women and Men in Data 2008
- Statistical Bulletin – Women and Men in Data 2005 and Women and Men in Data 2008 (English language version of the above),
- Gender mainstreaming,
- Fulfilment of the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women II,
- Principles of the Equal Position of Men and Women in the European Union Law,
- Select Case-Law of the European Court of Justice on Equal Opportunities,
- Select Case-Law of the European Court of Justice on Equal Opportunities II,
- How and Why Prepare a Plan for Equality of Women and Men,
- A Guide on the Road to Equality Between Women and Men,
- European Structural Funds – Equality Between Women and Men in Project Applications,
- Information Leaflet on Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men – English and Czech version,
- English Version of the Educative Computer Game “Game over” (prepared for the government information campaign against domestic violence)

All publications were distributed to the individual departments of the Czech government, to the social partners, to the non-profit and non-governmental organizations and to other involved subjects (such as schools); the materials are also available free-of-charge to the public, academic sphere, other non-profit organizations etc.

Simultaneously, during the period being monitored here, the following research projects were presented which were initiated by the Equal Opportunities Section:

- Analysis of the low numbers of women in political decision-making functions. The project was publicly presented on 30. 11. 2004 by its researches from the Institute for Sociology of the Czech Academy Sciences at the seminar entitled “Possibilities and questions of application of sociological research into practice and into policies seeking to establish equal opportunities for men and women.” The seminar was attended by the representatives of individual departments, academia, Czech Parliament, non-profit and non-governmental organizations and by the public.
- Analysis of sexual harassment of women and men at the workplace, which was realized by the Institute for Sociology of the Czech Academy Sciences. This analysis contains a sociological survey which aimed to collect data on the situation in small, mid-size and large businesses with various gender structures, and which should contribute to the charting and analysis of the occurrences of sexual harassment at the workplace.
- Promotion of access for women and men to employment in fields which are not naturally traditional to them. This project was realized by the STEM Agency. The survey indentified the standpoints of women and men to the mechanisms which influence the selection of profession and training. It evaluated the satisfaction with the selected professions, both in fields that are typical for women and typical for men, as well as the opinions of the women who are involved in typically male professions and men who hold typically female positions. The survey shows that the public perceives significantly more the penetration of women into traditionally male domains (30%) than the penetration of the men into typically female professions (12%).
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs commissioned a survey, in order to ascertain the situation on the job market in terms of access to it by handicapped people with special attention to the issues of equality for women and men entitled “Analysis of low rates of employment of handicapped women.” The survey charted the employment rates of

handicapped men and women taking account the equal opportunities. At the same time the analysis identified the opinions of the public on the low employment figures for handicapped women and proposed measures which could assist in increasing the number of employed handicapped women. The survey confirmed that handicapped women have met more often with refusal from the potential employer than men, for reasons of fear of higher sickness rates or reasons of the women requiring part-time positions due to childcare.

- In order to ascertain the disbursement of public finances in the field of social services provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs a research was commissioned to analyze the funds disbursed in subsidies to select policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs from the viewpoint of the equality of the women and the men. The authors reached a conclusion that at present it would not be desirable to introduce gender criteria into the methodology evaluating the proposed projects because the hitherto prepared analyses do not provide information on such quality levels which would enable re-distribution of funds on the basis of gender. The authors propose to impose an obligation on the applicants to specify the gender of their contemplated clients which would lead to collection of necessary data for further analysis of the matter, but which would not result in introduction of gender-related criteria in the evaluating methodology which could have counter-productive effect due to the possibility of distortion of data. The results of the analysis in terms of persevering and creation of equal opportunities for women and men show that in the areas being monitored – i.e. in the sphere of social services, family policies and integration of foreigners – there are no significant disproportions.
- In 2005 the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, acting through its Equal Opportunity Section, commissioned a sociological survey focusing on the promoting the use of parental leave by the men. This survey analysed the position of men and women in Czech families and concluded that that the mothers often assume the dominant position in terms of childcare and upbringing even though the situations where both parents are involved on equal level more than before slowly rise. The role of the mother is viewed by the population predominantly as the role of a caregiver. The women themselves see the importance of their role in this light and adhere to it. Men are viewed mostly as breadwinners even though a large section of the population is able to accept that men may be able to care for a small child. The opinions of the population significantly differentiate in connection with the age and education of the respondent.

Since 2002 the Equal Opportunity Section has been monitoring the shifts in public opinion in terms of equal opportunities for women and men chiefly by the survey entitled “Trends of socio-political mechanisms influencing gender relations” which is processed by the Factum Invenio agency (formerly Taylor Nelson Sofres Factum). Annually, a representative sample of the Czech population is given the same questions related to gender equality and answers are analysed in terms of the differences and in the perceived development of the opinion on the given topic. The last analysed “trends” which were surveyed between September 12 and September 17, 2008 show that:

- The population of the Czech Republic is under the impression that the opportunities of men and women are not equal in the individual areas of life.
- According to the public opinion the sole area where the women have better opportunities than men (68.1 %) exist in relation to obtaining the children into care in connection with divorce.
- According to the public opinion the domain of work is the predominant domain of the men – especially in terms of receiving the same pay for the same work, the women are at disadvantage here according to two thirds of the population (68.1 %).

- A sphere which is viewed in terms of gender opportunities as equal is education. Eight out of ten citizens (83.9 %) are of the opinion (83.9 %) that men and women have equal opportunity to obtain university education.
- Generally, the women are more pessimistic in evaluating their opportunities than men (with regard to the evaluation of the opportunities of the women).
- Public opinion on these issues is more or less stable.

The results of the public opinion surveys signalize in what spheres the gender stereotypes persist, and which spheres should be targeted by information campaigns raising the general awareness of the issues.

In order to strengthen the solutions of the issues of equal opportunities for women and men the government adopted already in 2001 a consultation body, the so-called “Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men” (hereinafter the “Council”). The Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men creates temporary or permanent working groups in order to ensure more intensive work in relation to concrete areas under its mandate (such as the Working Group on Equal Opportunity and Family).

The Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men prepares proposals aiming to promote and achieve equal opportunities for women and men and recommends to the government the fundamental conceptual directions for government action in implementing equal opportunities for women and men, coordinates the fundamental direction of the department concepts in the area of equal opportunities for women and men, defines the priorities for the departmental projects which seek to implement equal opportunities for women and men, identifies the actual issues within the society which are related to the equal opportunities for women and men and evaluates the efficiency of the fulfilment of the principles of equal opportunities for women and men. Furthermore, the Council addressed the issues of employment of persons post their parental (maternal) leave, rights of the child and parents’ rights from the viewpoint of the judges and subject which are involved in the protection of the rights of the children and [it addressed also] the gender impact of the reforms of public finances.

At present time (2008) the Council focuses primarily on the improvement of the position of the victims of domestic violence, stalking, provision of quality and safe refuge in those cases when the victim elect to resolve the situation by leaving their partner/aggressor. In connection with these activities the Council also specializes in position of the children who are the victims and witnesses of the domestic violence. At present time, the Council is also in the process of preparation of government resolution which would help increase the visibility of the role of the fathers in families and which would raise the awareness of the positive impact of effective harmonization of family and professional lives of both of the parents.

The Government Council established two Committees: Committee for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Family and Working Life. The primary goal of the Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Family and Working Life is promotion of the family life and removal of the professional disadvantages of those who desire to be more involved in the upbringing of the children and in the care for their family members. It is primarily the women who have a longer carrier ladders as they are forced to put together their professional life with the upbringing of the children or care for handicapped family members of the seniors. The Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Family and Working Life follows

onto the activities that were implemented in the sphere of harmonization of working and family life by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Its activities focus on the extensions of the supply of services in childcare and on the implementation of measures which could contribute to shortening the duration of time for which one's professional career is interrupted due to the reasons of childcare, on promotion of flexible working arrangements and other similarly directed changes. The Committee further promotes the active involvement of men into the family life, especially in connection with the upbringing of the children; besides that the Committee aims to establish a generally functioning society that is family-friendly.

The Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the Family and Working Life recommended on April 14, 2008 to the Council to solve the legislative arrangement (including taxation issues) of a broad spectre of facilities offering childcare which would further the interests of harmonization of the family and working life (such as operation of company day-care centers, maternal centers, mutual parental help, municipal nurseries and similar). At the same meeting the Committee recommended to the Council to consolidate the agenda related to childcare for pre-school children under one single Ministry. The Council deliberated on both these motions and adopted them at its meeting on 16 May 2008.

The Committee for Prevention of Domestic Violence aims to create a national strategy for combating domestic violence and coordinates the inter-departmental efforts which implement these strategies. The Committee monitors the statistical evidence of the various forms of domestic violence and advocates for the necessary legislative steps as well as promotes education of professionals who come into contact with the victims of domestic violence. In order to further its primary activities the Committee established Working Groups (Working Group for National Action Plan and Working Group for Stalking). The Committee is charged with preparation of standards of services to be provided to the victims of domestic violence and with creation of preventive and treatment programs for violent offenders.

On September 15, 2008 the Committee for Prevention of Domestic Violence charged its select members to conduct an enquiry into the issue of secret asylum homes and to recommend to the Council that this group prepares and tables, in the name of the Council, a motion to establish a special institution of secret asylum homes including the relevant standards and to discuss this motion with the expert inter-departmental group that deals with the protection of the children and with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and potentially with other involved institutions. At this very same meeting the Committee created a working group focussed on domestic violence and recommended to the Council that this group works, in the name of the Council, with the Ministry of Justice on the re-codification of the procedural penal regulations with the intent to strengthen the legal protection of the victims of domestic violence.

The members of the Committee also proposed an establishment of a new criminal offence of "a dangerous pursuit" (the so-called stalking) into the penal code. This motion was adopted by the Council on May 16, 2008 and it was recommended to the Minister of Justice to introduce this criminal offence by December 31, 2008 into reality; this recommendation was adopted on June 19, 2008 by the Constitutional Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic.

Part III.

Institutional development or those structures and measures countries have put in place to support promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Equal Opportunities Section was established at the Ministry of Labour and social Affairs in 1998. In 2001, the Czech government established its own consulting body in the form of the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. In 2002 each ministry created a position for an officer who is by profession involved in the issues of equal opportunities for women and men, the so-called gender focal point.

In connection with the appointment of the new government by the president of the Czech Republic on 9 January 2007, there has been created a new post of the government minister who oversees the agenda of the human rights, minorities as well as gender issues. Consequently, the government charged the Minister for Human Rights and Minorities, by its resolution No. 762 dated 11 July 2007, with the coordination of the equal opportunities for women and men as of 1 January 2008 and the Equal Opportunities Section was transferred from the competence of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs under the competence of Minister for Human Rights and Minorities. The Minister for Human Rights and Minorities was appointed, on 11 June 2007, to chair the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

The government established, in 2001, its own consulting body entitled "Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men." The Council prepares proposals aiming to promote achievement of equal opportunities for women and men. The members of the of the Council represent the individual state departments, trade unions, employers as well as the professional and lay public. The number of Council members rose from 23 to 29 in 2008 due to creation of additional positions for the representatives of the public from various NGOs and for the experts who are involved in the field of equal opportunities for women and men. The permanent guests of the Council are the Governors of the Regions and the Mayor of Prague, representatives of the Association of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic, the former chairwoman of the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the chair of the Permanent Committee of the Chamber of Deputies for Equal Opportunities and the representatives of the Association of [Female] Managers and Entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic.

Effective on January 1, 2008 two Committees were created under the Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men: Committee for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Family and Working Life. The primary goal of the Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Family and Working Life is promotion of the family life and removal of the professional disadvantages of those who desire to be more involved in the upbringing of the children and in the care for their family members. The Committee for Prevention of Domestic Violence aims to create a national strategy for combating domestic violence and coordinates the inter-departmental efforts which implement these strategies.

On the basis of the Government resolution No. 456 dated 9 May 2001 there is at each ministry as of 1 January 2002 one officer (the so-called "gender focal point"), who is employed for at least half the normal working time, and who monitors, evaluates and

promotes equal opportunities for women and men at each individual ministry. Each ministry is also obliged, since 2002, to prepare its departmental priorities and procedures which implement the principles of equality between women and men and which take into account the specifics of each such department, and which delegates tasks which need to be in this field of equal opportunities achieved.

The individual gender focal points officers attend to the agenda of equal opportunities for women and men in the extent of their respective employment arrangements and follow the departmental priorities of each individual ministry. At present, the authorized staff have already found their methods of promoting the gender issues and some of them have already begun to develop their independent initiatives in terms of implementation of the principles of equality between the women and the men.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has been involved in the agenda of equal opportunities and position of men and women for a long time. Following onto the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action it prepared in 1997 for the Czech government the Information on the Position of the Women in Society which gave rise, effective as of 1 January 1998, to the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Section at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Since 1998, this Section had prepared, in its position of a coordinator of national agenda related to the equal position of women in society, the National Action Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, including its annual evaluation and updates (Priorities and procedures of the government in implementing the equality between the women and the men).

The said National Action Plan was since its very beginnings created in accordance with the conclusion reaches at the Fourth World Conference of the UN on Women which took place in Beijing in. The conference resulted in the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, which focuses on the elimination of discrimination of women in 12 problem areas. The validity and topicality of the Beijing Platform for Action was again confirmed in March of 2005 at the 49th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The National Action Plan which implements the principles of equality between the women and the men in the Czech Republic focuses, from the total of twelve areas defined in the Beijing Platform for Action, on the following seven problematic areas that are topical for the Czech Republic:

- Advocacy of the principles of equality of men and women as a part of governmental policies;
- Legislative implementation of the pre-requisites bringing about equality of men and women and raising of the awareness of these principles in terms of legal thinking,
- Ensuring equal opportunities of men and women in their access to economic activities,
- Reconciliation of the social standing of the women and the men caring for children and the family members requiring care,
- Making provisions for women in terms of their reproductive function and physiological differences,
- Combating violence committed against women,
- Monitoring and evaluation of activities seeking to implement the principles of equal standing of women and men.

The program document entitled “Priorities and procedures of the government in implementing the equality between the women and the men” also accentuates the goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The European Union member states intend to achieve progress by 2015 in eight key developmental missions – Millennium

Development Goals which reflect the attention of the world community that is paid to the significant and measurable improvement of the quality of human life. A great emphasis is put especially on the section 3 of this document – Promotion of gender equality and empowering women.

The government resolution No. 456 dated 9 May 2001 imposed on all ministers an obligation, effective as of 1 January 2002, to complete specific departmental program document which would address promotion of equality of women and men in areas which fall under their material competence.

On the basis of government resolution No. 762 dated 11 July 2007, the Equal Opportunities Section at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was transferred under the competence of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, effective as of 31 December 2007. Simultaneously with this delimitation the Section changed its name to Section of the Secretariat of the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

The Section primarily fulfils the following tasks:

- Ensures the preparation of the proposals for the National Action Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men “Priorities and procedures of the government in implementing the equality between the women and the men” and their evaluation,
- On the basis of the evaluation of implementation of the National Action Plan it updates the measures therein contained,
- Integrates the principles of equal opportunities for women and men into law, implements the gender directives of the EU and other international documents such as of the EU, Council of Europe, International Labour Organization, etc.
- Develops cooperation among the officers of individual departments who are charged with resolution of gender issues (gender focal points) and coordinates their activities,
- Cooperates with the trade union and employer associations and with the NGOs.
- Participates on the development of gender statistics and on the publication of statistics (as a part of the various information campaigns).

The Section employees also administer the webpages which deal with equal opportunities for women and men and which are available at the servers of the Office of the Czech Government (www.vlada.cz) and which presents news, important national and international documents, survey results, expert studies and publications.

Czech Republic regularly participated during the monitored period, via its Section of the Secretariat of the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, in events organized by the United Nations (UN), International Labour Organization (ILO), Council of Europe (CE), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and by the European Union (EU), which are all organization which declare the equality of men and women as one of its principles anchored in their establishing documents. The above mentioned organizations have created for these purposes competent units (whether in the form of Commissions, Committees etc.), which aim to project the policies of equality for men and women into all strategies, policies and measures of the organization itself or its member states, and which seek to evaluate the successes of these policies and coordinate their activities in the field of equal opportunities with other international organizations.

Part IV.

Information on the remaining key challenges and constraints in the reporting States, as well as any plans for future actions and initiatives to address these and to ensure full implementation of the Platform for Action in each of the critical areas of concern.

Equal opportunities for women and men form a part of the inviolable human rights. The Antidiscrimination Act which awaits its approval by the Chamber of Deputies is one of the legal instruments which shall assist the protection of the human rights and strengthen the enforcement of justice. It is significant legislative tool for the Czech Republic for the promotion of equal opportunity policies.

In the Czech Republic, the National Action Plan “Priorities and procedures of the government in implementing the equality between the women and the men” was first adopted in 1998. This document has been updated annually since. At present time this plan is being updated and the new priorities are being formulated for 2009. The priorities being considered include for instance employment, equal pay for women and men, economical independence of women, increased participation of women in politics, support provided to the NGOs, educational activities in the area of equal opportunities for women and men, gender budgeting, development of childcare services, combating the violence committed against women and human trafficking. The updated version of the National Action Plan is to be submitted to the government by April 30, 2009.

One of the main obstacles in creating of equal opportunities are prejudice and stereotypical notions on the role of the women and men in society. A conference organized under the auspices of the Czech presidency of the Council of the European Union (first half of 2009) shall address the issues of overcoming of gender stereotypes. The conference will be held on 27 May 2009 in Prague and will aim to facilitate an exchange of experiences among the European Union member states in terms of finding the new roads and methods of overcoming gender stereotypes.

From among other important events taking place during CZ PRES we should also mention the representation of the European Union at the session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women which will take place in the first two week in March 2009 in New York. This is an important global event attended by the representatives of all UN members. Czech Republic will actively pursue here the goal of achieving further progress in the creation of equal opportunities for women and men.

Czech Republic, acting as the presiding country, will also represent the EU member states at the summit of the International Labour Organization – International Labour Conference to be held between May 28 and June 13, 2009 in Geneva. The 2009 conference plans to include in the discussion the topic of equal opportunities for women and men.

CZ PRES will prepare and submit, at the summit of the Council of Ministers for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs on 8 June 2009 in Luxembourg, the proposal for the Council conclusions on Equal opportunities for women and men 50+ in active life and dignified ageing. The text of the proposed Council conclusions will be

discussed at the meeting of the Working Group for Social Affairs (EU Council) in April or May 2009 with the aim of reaching a consensus among the member states.

The practical implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is also carried out by projects realized within the framework of the European Social Fund, the Community programme PROGRESS and through individual national projects.