

Information on implementation of Croatia's commitments made at 2015 Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

At national level, Croatia has worked towards women's economic empowerment by undertaking specific measures aimed at improving the status of women in the labour market. Special emphasis has been put on the employment of vulnerable groups such as women with lower or inadequate skills or education, young women, long-term unemployed women, and particularly women with disabilities, women victims of violence or human trafficking, and women members of Roma minority. Croatia has also introduced a package of support measures which includes education, counselling, promotion of flexible types of work with a view to balancing professional and private life, and personalised public works programmes such as providing childcare and care for the elderly. Furthermore, Croatia has been implementing specific measures to advance female business, such as additional scores for the participation of women entrepreneurs in all projects eligible for state funding, and a special loan program for women entrepreneurs, as a part of the comprehensive *National Strategy of Women Entrepreneurship*. Croatia has also adopted labour legislation containing the obligation of equal pay for men and women for work of equal value and Government remains committed to further positive measures with a view of ensuring that women's educational attainments (proportion of women in the total number of university graduates in Croatia is about 60%, and women account for 58% of Master program's graduates and 55% of all PhD graduates) and their increased participation in the labour market better match with equal employment opportunities, prospects for advancement and equal pay.

Croatian Government has also been focusing on effective prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. The new National Strategy of Protection against Domestic Violence for the period 2017-2022 is currently being drafted. Furthermore, having signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2013, Croatia plans to ratify the Convention by the end of 2017.

With a view to tackle critical remaining gaps and challenges to real equality between women and men, Croatia is currently drafting a new - fifth in a row - *National Policy for Gender Equality for the period 2017-2020*. The CEDAW Committee's recommendations from July 2015 will be included as priority goals and measures.

At the international level, Croatia has taken steps to integrate gender perspective and the promotion of gender equality in all its foreign policy activities, international development cooperation and relations with third countries. More focus has been put on Croatia's international engagement to empower women and girls, especially in countries facing conflicts and going through post-conflict democratic transition such as Afghanistan, where Croatia has finalized several developments project in the field of education, reproductive health and small business for women.

Furthermore, Croatia has been chairing the Equal Futures Partnership, which is an innovative multilateral initiative envisaged to encourage member countries to empower women

economically and politically. Croatia officially took over the initiative's chairmanship from the United States on the margins of the 60th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 15 March 2016). On this occasion, jointly with the United States, Croatia hosted an open forum side event on *Tackling Violence against Women as a Prerequisite for Sustainable Development*. The Croatia's Chairmanship program - under the moto: *Securing a Future for Women around the World* – also included high level event chaired by the President of the Republic of Croatia, Ms. Kolinda Grabar Kitarović which took place in New York, on the margins of last year 71st UN General Assembly Session.