



SLOVENIA

Information of the Republic of Slovenia on implementation of Slovenian commitments made at 2015 Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

30 September 2016

Slovenia pledges to challenge traditional norms, call on men and boys as agents of change and pursue equality by 2020 fully committed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Slovenia affirms the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, calling for each and every goal to involve the equal participation and equal enjoyment of rights for women and girls. Gender equality requires the active involvement of men and boys, which is why leading officials have joined the HeForShe campaign.

Slovenia will continue to promote the roles and responsibilities of men and boys as allies and agents of change.

Slovenia supports and promotes the role and responsibility of men and boys as allies and agents of change in the promotion of gender equality and women's and girls' right both domestically and internationally. Slovenia believes that gender equality goals could not be achieved by women alone but also requires active involvement of men and boys. We should continue working with men and boys as allies and agents of change in all areas of concern where their engagement is of a particular importance. For example: the prevention of gender-based violence, taking equal responsibility for unpaid care work, challenging gender stereotypes in education and guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Slovenia continues its activities aiming at the promotion of equal sharing of responsibilities and chores between men and women in care giving and domestic work. Slovenia has already launched the project (Active.all) in order to address and to reduce gender stereotypes in the area of equal participation of women and men in care and housework responsibilities and to develop and implement a model of a systematic gender mainstreamed community based approach in tackling these stereotypes and to improve the reconciliation of work and family life, with the emphasis on active fatherhood.

In 2016 Slovenia also launched an awareness-raising media campaign in order to improve awareness on power relations and distribution of resources between women and men and recognition of gender equality as a common good. Main message of the campaign that among others focused on promoting better reconciliation of work and private-life on was "Let's support gender equality!"

Additionally to Government activities civil society is also active in this field. In 2015–2016, a project on work-life balance of men (Fathers and Employers in Action) has been implemented. It aimed to enhance awareness about gender equality in Slovenia, defeminise work-life balance and acknowledge and include needs needs diversity in work-life balance processes.

In various international fora, Slovenia continues its support for gender equality in general and role of men and boys as agents of change in this field. In 2016, Slovenian permanent Representative to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been

presiding over OSCE MenEngage Network. The Network seeks to raise awareness of the important influence men can have in ending gender-based violence and speaking out against all kinds of inequality.

Having kept the issue of violence against women and girls high on the political agenda, and becoming a party to the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Slovenia has made significant progress on prevention and response.

In 2016 Slovenian government established inter-governmental working group for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. The group is responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by this Convention.

In order to comply with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention, the government adopted some changes to The Family Violence Prevention Act (2008) and to the Penal Code (recognizing stalking and forced marriage as a criminal offence).

Internationally, Slovenia has been promoting its long-standing position that violence against women and girls as the most prevailing women's human right violation must be strictly prohibited and punished. At the margins of 29th session of UN Human Rights Council (June 2015) Slovenian Permanent Representation organised a photo exhibition "Violence on her skin". The exhibition is part of VESNA project (first overall national project dealing violence against women) and has been exhibited in all major Slovenian cities. Slovenia has also been supporting fights against violence against women and psycho-social support to women victims of domestic violence through international development assistance projects (in 2016 in Bosna and Herzegovina, Lebanon).

It further affirms its commitment to foster gender equality by planning to adopt a national programme for equality between women and men by 2020.

Slovenia confirmed its commitment to foster the gender equality policy by adopting the mid-term strategy - the national programme for equality between women and men, 2015-2020. The national programme covers the following priority areas: economic independence and work-life balance, gender stereotypes, social inclusion, decision-making, violence against women and gender equality in foreign policy and international cooperation. The National Programme defines key objectives focused on the following:

- eliminating gender imbalances and gender segregation in employment and tackling unemployment;*
- improving the situation of women and men regarding social inclusion;*
- eliminating obstacles to the reconciliation of work, private and family life;*
- eliminating the gender gap and gender segregation in education;*
- eliminating inequalities in science and higher education;*
- eliminating stereotypes in society, particularly in the media, culture and sport;*
- improving the health of women and men;*
- eliminating the obstacles to balanced representation of women and men in various areas of political and social life;*
- zero-tolerance of violence against women;*
- strengthening gender mainstreaming in the Slovenian developmental, peace and other foreign policy initiatives.*

The particular tasks and activities needed to achieve these objectives and implement particular measures will be defined in biannual action plans, which will specify the time limits and implementation methods. First action plan covering the implementation period 2016-2017 was adopted in the beginning of this year.

Speaking at the Global Leaders' Meeting on 27 September 2015, Prime Minister Miroslav Cerar said: "Inequalities between women and men still exist, and no country is immune to this. We pledge and call on others to... further challenge traditional notions of masculinities, and traditional norms, laws, and practices that support them."

In 2016 Protection against discrimination Act was adopted. It is a fundamental and general law (lex generalis) on the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of any personal circumstances, which includes also the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sex.

The Law:

- *lays down common basis and starting points for ensuring equal treatment of everybody in the exercise of their rights, obligations and fundamental freedoms in any area of social life, irrespective of personal circumstances such as sex, nationality, racial or ethnic origin, language, religious or other conviction, disability, age, sexual orientation, sexual identity in sexual expression, social status, financial state, education, or any other personal circumstance;*
- *stipulates that the State bodies and bodies of self-governing local communities are responsible for providing the conditions for equal treatment;*
- *defines discrimination, equal treatment, direct and indirect discrimination and other forms of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment and adoption of special measures; and*
- *establishes the Advocate of the Principle of Equality as an independent state body, with the competencies conferred by the Act.*

Gender equality and empowerment of women is one of Slovenian foreign policy priorities in the field of human rights. Slovenia has been active and vocal supporter of gender equality in international organisations and also in bilateral cooperation. We believe that awareness-raising, education, including human rights education and training, elimination of all forms of violence against women, women's full and equal participation in decision making, the dismantling of gender stereotypes, as well as the role of men and boys are all important elements in achieving gender equality.

Empowerment of women and gender equality is also a priority of Slovenian international development cooperation. Slovenia is committed to embrace the full potential of women envisaged by the Agenda 2030. We are currently preparing a new national Resolution on international development cooperation, the primary strategic document to guide Slovene development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, which will reflect the vision of the Agenda 2030. Gender equality and empowerment of women will continue being one of the thematic priority areas of Slovene development cooperation. To ensure its effective implementation, we will furthermore adopt specific guidelines on gender equality and the empowerment of women.