

- Pursuant to Article 15 of the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia / [Uradni list RS], Nos 59/02, 61/07 – ZUNEO-A, 33/16 – ZVarD and 59/19) and Article 109 of the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 92/07 – official consolidated version, 105/10, 80/13, 38/17, 46/20, 105/21 – Constitutional Court Decision 111/21 and 58/23), the National Assembly, at the session held on 22 September 2023, adopted the

RESOLUTION
on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2023–2030
(ReNPEMŽM23–30)

1. Introduction

The Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (hereinafter: the ReNPEMŽM23–30) is a strategic document defining the objectives, measures and key policy makers in the area of equal opportunities for men and women in particular spheres of life in Slovenia for the period from 2023 to 2030. The promotion and establishment of equal opportunities is above all an obligation of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter: the Slovenian Government) and its ministries which, within the scope of their respective competences in their area of work, adopt measures for the implementation of the goals laid down in the Resolution. The new programme document contains government (sectoral) policies and measures that include gender dimension or equal opportunities for women and men as a cross-cutting theme.

The direct legal basis for the preparation and implementation of the National Programme is the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 59/02, 61/07 – ZUNEO-A, 33/16 – ZVarD and 59/19; hereinafter: the ZEMŽM), wherein Article 15 stipulates that the National Programme shall define basic equal opportunity policies and, in addition to compulsory contents prescribed for all long-term programme documents, determine in particular the aims and measures for the achievement of the goals in individual fields of social life, above all in the fields of employment, social assistance and healthcare, education, family relations, violence against women and representation of women and men in public life, as well as the responsibility for implementation of the measures. It must also define the content and those in charge of periodic plans for the implementation of orientations and tasks under the National Programme in individual fields of life in society, data to be collected, processed, linked, preserved, analysed and presented in a gender-segregated manner within the framework of the activities of the National Statistical Office, surveys or opinion polls, the method of monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the National Programme, and the approximate amount of funds for the implementation of measures under the National Programme and the method of providing these funds.

In line with the statutory definition of the mandatory content of the National Programme, the ReNPEMŽM23–30 sets out the objectives and measures of the basic policies on equal opportunities for women and men, in particular in the following key areas of life in society:

- labour relations, family relations, social assistance: closing the gender gap and ensuring equal economic independence for women and men;
- education: reducing inequalities between women and men and overcoming stereotypical social roles;
- health: improving women's health and reducing health inequalities between men and women;

- violence against women: preventing and combating all forms of violence against women and girls;
- decision-making positions: promoting a balanced representation of women and men;
- foreign affairs: promoting gender equality and the exercise of women's rights around the world.

Each of the six thematic areas provides a contextual starting point, drawing mainly on EU commitments and other key strategic orientations in the field of equal opportunities for women and men. It provides information on the situation of women and men in society, identifies the main objectives and measures to be implemented by individual institutions responsible for measures, and the corresponding indicators.

The responsible institutions are ministries and other bodies which, in cooperation with the ministry responsible for gender equality – at the time of the adoption of the document, this was the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (hereinafter: the MDDSZ) – ensure the implementation of the goals and measures set out in the ReNPEMŽM23–30.

The specific measures identified in the ReNPEMŽM23–30 are aimed at improving the position of the gender which is disadvantaged in one of these areas – this is mainly women – and at tackling the structural barriers that perpetuate and maintain existing inequalities. The (un)equal position is evident in the gender-disaggregated data and in the results of analyses focusing on gender differences or inequalities. Progress in reducing gender inequalities is measured by various indicators, which are listed at the end of each objective. A gender mainstreaming strategy is used to tackle structural inequalities and achieve long-term change towards gender equality, requiring a systematic approach to the design, implementation and evaluation of sectoral policies.

The ReNPEMŽM23–30 takes into account the recommendations, strategic orientations, objectives, measures and indicators identified in EU, international and national documents relevant to the implementation of the gender equality agenda. In setting its priorities and areas of focus, the ReNPEMŽM23–30 takes into account, in particular, the EU orientations set out in the new Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 (EC, 2020d) and other documents. The ReNPEMŽM23–30 is also consistent with the country's basic development documents.

An independent evaluation of the implementation of the previous Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2020 (ReNPEMŽM15–20, 2015) was carried out at the beginning of 2021; it made recommendations and proposals for the preparation of a new document, evaluated the implementation of the National Programme in the previous years and the expected effects of the implemented activities (Kanjuo-Mrčela and Mikić, 2021).

As gender equality is a cross-cutting policy, the ReNPEMŽM23–30 has been drafted in cooperation with various government bodies, which have provided a list of planned measures by the areas for which they are responsible and which they will implement. At the same time, in accordance with the principle of partnership, professionals, local authorities, social partners, human rights bodies and non-governmental organisations (hereinafter: NGOs) were also involved in the preparation of the document. The document was also discussed at the Expert Council on Gender Equality.

1.1 The purpose and objectives of the National Programme

Women and men are different from each other, but it is society's job to create equal opportunities for women and men. The central objective of the ReNPEMŽM23–30 is to improve the position of women in all their diversity and to create equal opportunities for women and men in all areas of life in society. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality as defined in Article 4 of the ZEMŽM, meaning that women and men equally participate in all fields of public and private life and that they have equal status, equal opportunities for the exercise of all rights and for the development of their personal potentials by which they contribute to social development, and equal benefit from the results arising from this development (the ZEMŽM, 2002).

Gender equality, respect for human rights and the empowerment of women and girls are key prerequisites for equitable and inclusive sustainable development, but they are also important values and goals in their own right. It is a principle that guarantees women and men the freedom to decide how to develop their potential and how to realise it in private and public life. Moreover, gender equality is essential for economic growth and poverty reduction, and is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and as such an important factor in maintaining and strengthening the stability of society as a whole. Although progress has been made in the exercise of women's human rights in some areas, gender inequality is still deeply rooted in countries' economic, cultural, social and political systems.

In Slovenia, women and men are equal, legally recognised as equal, have the same formal rights, and discrimination on the grounds of gender is prohibited. Slovenia has adopted a number of progressive legislative provisions that promote gender equality in various areas, taking into account or even going beyond EU and international commitments. Delivering on these commitments is not limited to *de iure equality*, which is enshrined in the legal framework, but is primarily about ensuring *de facto equality*, i.e. real or actual equality – an actual equal position in practice. Achieving *de facto* gender equality requires an appropriate institutional, legislative and social framework that enables commitments to be delivered on in everyday life. Gender equality is therefore a concept that combines both legal, formal equality and equality referring to the actual equal position and equality in practice.

Different indices measure progress and the achievement of actual (in)equality between women and men in different areas: the EIGE Gender Equality Index, which allows comparisons between EU Member States, focuses on six core areas (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) and two secondary areas (intersectional inequalities and violence) (EIGE, 2022a). The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, which includes more than 150 countries around the world, measures the effective equality of women and men in four areas: education, health, economy and politics (WEF, 2022). The OECD SIGI index focuses on social norms, values and attitudes as reflected by different social institutions (degree of discrimination) (OECD, 2022). The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index (GII) focuses in particular on differences in health, decision-making positions and economic status (UNDP, 2022).

Slovenia has long been one of the better performing countries in all these indices, or one of the countries with a relatively high level of equality in most areas of life in society, both globally and at the European level. Despite the relatively high level of equality achieved, no country, including Slovenia, has managed to close the gender gap completely in any area of measurement. In some areas, disparities have even widened. In Slovenia – as in many other EU countries – inequalities are mainly reflected in persistent gender segregation of the labour market; the gender pay and pension gaps; and the prevalence of violence against women and girls or gender-based violence; the increased poverty of older women in particular; the unequal gender distribution of care and household responsibilities, which has a negative impact on women's position in the labour market; gender imbalance in many areas; and, last but not least, stereotypical beliefs that inhibit the development of capacities

regardless of gender. This is also stressed in the Evaluation of the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015–2020 (Kanjuo-Mrčela and Mikić, 2021). As the EIGE Gender Equality Index notes, a detailed analysis of the situation in 2020 shows a renewed deterioration in many areas of life. This is most visible in the (still) prevailing gender segregation in education and employment (segregation is a particular concern in new fields of work, such as the digital sector, where men strongly dominate education and employment), the widening pay gap, the decline of proportion of women in politics and the economy, the increase in gender segregation in employment, and so on (Kanjuo-Mrčela and Mikić, 2021). These findings are confirmed by the EIGE Gender Equality Index 2021, which points out that Slovenia was the only country to decline in the ranking, with a score of 67.6, just below the average. The decline was biggest in the area of political representation (by two percentage points) (EIGE, 2021a). Since 2019, the score remained almost unchanged, and Slovenia also ranked 12th in 2022, with a score of 67.5 points, 0.1 points lower than in 2021. Compared to 2021, Slovenia made the most progress in the area of work (+0.4), while it regressed the most in the area of health (-0.9) (EIGE, 2022a).

In order to make progress and eliminate inequalities, the National Programme sets general objectives based on the position of women and men in Slovenia. These objectives are:

- reducing the gender gap in all areas of social life, especially employment, education, health and social status;
- sharing care work more equally between both parents or partners;
- overcoming stereotypes and sexist and discriminatory practices that deepen gender inequality;
- A minimum gender balance in decision-making positions;
- zero tolerance of violence against women and girls or gender-based violence, effective legal aid and sanctions for perpetrators;
- empowering women and girls and gender equality in international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, international operations and missions, other peace efforts and other international activities.

The above objectives ensure the following:

- implementation/realisation of national and international commitments in accordance with the legal order of Slovenia relating to gender equality and protection against discrimination on the grounds of gender;
- protection of and respect for human rights and promotion of equality and equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender or other personal circumstances;
- a non-discriminatory social environment where paid work, care obligations and leisure activities can be reconciled in all life periods;
- a fairer society more gender-balanced in the distribution of decision-making power and equal access to financial and human resources;
- decision-making in a more inclusive society that promotes the inclusion of all, including vulnerable groups of women and men;
- sustainable and inclusive economic development enabling the development of skills and competences for high-quality life and work for all, regardless of gender or other personal circumstances;
- a better and more decent life for all Slovenia's residents, including in the face of the challenges posed by demographic change.

The ReNPEMŽM23–30 also identifies specific objectives which form the basis for measures under each of the thematic areas.

1.2 Institutional framework

Since the UN was founded, one of its fundamental objectives has been to promote and strengthen respect for human rights for all. As a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Slovenia is already committed to establishing, maintaining and strengthening a central national structure in the executive branch of government, as the key obligations of Slovenia under Article 2 of the CEDAW Convention contain the formulation and continued effective implementation of a policy to eliminate discrimination against women. This obligation includes, inter alia, the existence and functioning of a body within the government responsible for gender mainstreaming in all laws and policies, and for initiating, coordinating and overseeing the preparation and implementation of legislation, policies and programmes necessary to fulfil the obligations under the Convention (UN, 1992b).

States Parties have some discretion to establish such governmental bodies, in particular according to the institutional arrangements best suited to the national context, but they must ensure that the establishment of a central governmental body for gender equality and its functioning have an adequate legal basis, that its status and placement within the governmental structure enable it to work towards the achievement of the objectives of gender equality at the national level, and that it therefore has adequately defined competences and tasks, and that it is adequately resourced, both financially and in terms of personnel, to carry out its tasks. If States Parties decide to place responsibility for gender equality policy in one of the ministries responsible for other policies, the placement in the organisational structure of the ministry must ensure that the conditions for the effective functioning of the central governmental mechanism for gender equality are met.

In Slovenia, the Office for Equal Opportunities was responsible for gender equality until 2012; since 2012, gender equality has been overseen by the MDDSZ.

The basic competences and tasks of the National Gender Equality Mechanism in Slovenia are laid down in the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (hereinafter: the ZEMŽM, 2002). The Ministry responsible for gender equality or equal opportunities for women and men monitors specific areas of life in society from the perspective of gender equality and proposes to the Government and ministries the adoption or amendment of laws and other regulations and the adoption of other measures; it coordinates activities aimed at gender mainstreaming, including providing expert support in establishing appropriate methods and techniques; coordinates the preparation of the National Programme and monitors its implementation; coordinates the production of reports on the fulfilment of Slovenia's international obligations in the field of equal opportunities; cooperates with non-governmental organisations working in the field of equal opportunities for women and men and co-finances their projects or activities.

In accordance with Article 11 of the ZEMŽM, gender equality in Slovenia is a horizontal issue: the promotion and establishment of equal opportunities is primarily a task of the Government and the ministries, which, within the framework of their competences in their various fields of work, are to pursue the objectives laid down in the Act (ZEMŽM, 2002) by means of general and special measures.

In drawing up regulations and other measures that apply in the fields which are relevant for the establishment of equal opportunities, ministries must take into consideration the gender equality perspective, work together with the ministry responsible for equal opportunities for this purpose and take into account its suggestions and opinions. The ministry responsible for equal opportunities and other ministries, within the framework of their competences, must monitor and examine other forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender that are an obstacle to the establishment of equal opportunities in accordance with the ZEMŽM, such as violence arising from unequal gender relations, and take them into consideration in their measures intended to achieve the aim of the Act. According to Article

13 of the ZEMŽM, these tasks are the responsibility of the coordinators appointed by the ministers, each for their respective field of work (ZEMŽM, 2002). The general orientations for the work of ministries and coordinators, the manner of cooperation of ministries with the central authority competent for gender equality, and priority fields for the period 2016–2020 were determined by the Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in the Work of Ministries 2016–2020 (MDDSZ, 2016b). The aim was to improve the processes needed to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy. Most of the measures and priorities covered by the guidelines are included in the ReNPEMŽM23–30.

Self-governing local communities can also have an equal opportunities coordinator, who proposes measures and activities to create equal opportunities and advises on solutions within each local authority. By 2020, around 20% of local authorities had taken these recommendations into account and around 5% had action plans in place (EIGE, 2020c).

Most ministries designate a person to coordinate equal opportunities for women and men who, in addition to their regular duties, carries out coordination, advisory and facilitation tasks. Some ministries have established special consulting or expert bodies that oversee the implementation of tasks in the field of equal opportunities for women and men within the ministry. Active within the MDDSZ since 2014 is the Expert Council for Gender Equality, which is an advisory body of the Minister for monitoring and evaluation of the situation and progress in the implementation of the principle of equality of women and men in various fields of life in society and for making initiatives, proposals and recommendations for developing gender equality policy. The Ministry of the Interior (MNZ) has a gender mainstreaming consulting body responsible for ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in the MNZ and its constituent bodies. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation (MVZI) has a commission for equal opportunities in science, an expert body of the Ministry advising the Ministry in support of its promotional and other activities in the field of equal opportunities in science and taking into account the principle of gender-balanced representation when appointing the working bodies within its competence and drafting legal acts and other strategic documents in the field of science.

In order to promote equal treatment and ensure protection against discrimination on the grounds of different personal circumstances, including the personal circumstance of gender, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality was established as an independent state body in Slovenia in 2016, in accordance with European law. The role of the body to promote equal treatment, or equality body, was redefined by the Protection against Discrimination Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 33/16 and 21/18 – ZNOrg; hereinafter referred to as the ZVarD), which replaced the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 93/07 – Official Consolidated Version and No 33/16 - ZVarD) of 2004. The Advocate of the Principle of Equality provides information, advice and advocacy. They receive reports of discrimination and determine discrimination in administrative proceedings. They research and monitor the situation of discrimination in Slovenia, make recommendations to the competent authorities on protection against discrimination, raise public awareness, draw up reports on the state of discrimination and so on.

1.3 Preparation and implementation of the National Programme

The drafting of the ReNPEMŽM23–30 was coordinated by the central equality body, the Equal Opportunities Division (hereinafter: SEM) of the MDDSZ, in the same way as the previous national programmes (2005-2013 and 2015-2020) (ReNPEMŽM, 2005 and ReNPEMŽM15–20, 2015). Based on the international and European documents and recommendations presented below, key objectives and priority areas were identified first.

The starting points for drafting the report included statistical data, research findings and studies on the current situation in this field in Slovenia. The measures were developed by the ministries or government departments responsible for gender mainstreaming in their respective policy areas, in cooperation with the SEM. These are measures proposed by the ministries in line with the identified objectives and activities already being carried out or to be carried out in the future to address gender inequalities or gender-specific situations in each area.

The National Programme sets out measures to achieve the objectives in six thematic areas. The objectives and measures set out in the National Programme for 2023–2030 are based on the analysis of the situation of women and men in different areas and on the evaluation of the previous National Programme, and constitute the overall strategic orientations in each area. The objectives and measures set out in the National Programme will be implemented by ministries and other government bodies in cooperation with other participating authorities. While most of the measures involve the implementation of a ministry's policy in a specific area, individual measures to promote gender equality also aim to improve the expertise and knowledge of key stakeholders in the field of gender equality, as well as to strengthen institutions in the field. The planning of the measures also took into account the current situation at the time of the ReNPEMŽM23–30, as this was also the period of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic (hereafter: the pandemic), in particular with regard to the economic and social consequences for various vulnerable groups.

The objectives and measures set out in the ReNPEMŽM23–30 will be implemented through activities. Specific, well-defined activities will be set out in the periodic plans, which are the implementing acts of the National Programme. They will identify the activities needed for each area of life in society over a two-year period. For each activity, the method of implementation, the expected result and the contribution to the achievement of the objectives will be specified. Activities will be carried out in all six thematic areas identified in the National Programme. In accordance with Article 16 of the ZEMŽM, the ministry responsible for equal opportunities will prepare a proposal for a periodic plan and submit it to the Slovenian Government for adoption, on the basis of proposals to be prepared by the competent ministries (ZEMŽM, 2002). The ministries must also send a report on the implementation of the activities set out in the periodic plan to the ministry responsible for equal opportunities no later than two months before the end of each periodic plan. The Slovenian Government will report every two years to the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia (the “National Assembly”) on the implementation of the National Programme. The report will list the measures and activities carried out in the previous two-year period.

In order to achieve gender equality and effective implementation of policies in this area, it is not enough to involve only the competent authorities in the process of drafting, implementation and monitoring, and it is important to strengthen forms of cooperation and partnership between the Slovenian Government and various stakeholders, in particular civil society. Various stakeholders have been involved in the process of drafting the National Programme. At the beginning of 2020, the MDDSZ SEM drafted a document with substantive premises and objectives in each strategic (thematic) area and sent it to the relevant ministries and government offices in order to formulate the measures to be implemented during the period of the Resolution on the basis of this draft document. Given the specific situation (pandemic), which did not allow for the organisation of face-to-face meetings, a consultative online survey was also carried out between July and September 2020 with representatives of NGOs, human rights bodies, research/academia and professional associations, local communities and social partners. They were also sent the substantive premises with proposed objectives and priority areas. In the light of the overwhelming response and the numerous comments and observations of these stakeholders, the SEM prepared a table of their suggestions and submitted it to the relevant ministries, and their

suggestions are also included in the independent final report on the evaluation of the previous Resolution (Kanjuro-Mrčela and Mikić, 2021).

At the end of 2020, a working group of coordinators from the ministries reconvened for a strategic webinar to review the planned objectives and measures and to discuss other challenges by thematic area to be addressed in the draft document. A first draft of the document was discussed in February 2021 by the Expert Council on Gender Equality, which brought together representatives of various professional associations and organisations, NGOs and humanitarian organisations. Their comments and suggestions were also sent to the relevant ministries. The public consultation on the draft document (19 February - 19 March 2021) brought a wide range of comments, observations and concrete suggestions for improving the text from around 20 different organisations, institutions and individuals, in different thematic areas and relevant ministries.

In 2022, the draft Resolution was updated and re-examined at a new meeting of the Expert Council on Gender Equality (January 2023), in the context of enhanced dialogue with civil society. Its proposals were taken up again by the ministries and meaningfully incorporated into the draft Resolution.

1.4. European and international commitments

In particular, the guidelines, objectives and proposals for measures to achieve gender equality contained in the main European and international strategic documents that specifically address gender equality, or themes of key importance for achieving gender equality, have been taken into account in the preparation of the design and basic premises of the National Programme. More recent documents relating to the period of validity of the ReNPEMŽM23–30 have also been taken into account, as well as more recent recommendations received by Slovenia from international institutions concerning reporting on the implementation of conventions. On the other hand, older documents with still relevant policy recommendations in specific areas also provide a basis for measures:

- Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 (EC);
- Gender Equality Strategy 2018–2023 (Council of Europe);
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UN);
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UN);
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN);
- Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Council of Europe);
- ILO Convention No 190 concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work;
- Gender Action Plan (GAP III) for the 2021–2025 period (EC);
- UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, which together form Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UN);
- Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security (2018 and 2022) and EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019) (European Commission).

Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025

The Strategy is the European Commission's (EC) strategic document setting out the objectives and measures for mainstreaming gender equality in all areas of EU action in the period 2020-2025 (EC, 2020d). The Strategy is based on Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, which stipulates that in all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women (OJ C 202, 2016). Accordingly, the Strategy sets out a vision, policy objectives and measures for concrete

progress towards gender equality in Europe and the Sustainable Development Goals, and identifies, inter alia, the following priorities for gender equality in the period 2020-2025:

- eliminating all forms of gender-based violence and overcoming gender stereotypes in society;
- achieving equal economic independence;
- balanced representation;
- gender mainstreaming in all EU policies.

Gender-based violence, or violence that disproportionately affects women, is identified in the Strategy as one of the greatest challenges facing our society; it is violence that is deeply rooted in gender inequality. To prevent gender-based violence, the Strategy calls, among other things, for the adoption of legal measures to achieve the objectives of the Istanbul Convention, which is the benchmark for international standards in this area (Council of Europe, 2011).

An EU Network on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence will also be set up to share good practices, and prevention of violence focusing on men, boys and masculinity will be central. To eradicate violence and harassment in the world of work, the EC encourages Member States to ratify ILO Convention No 190 concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work (hereinafter: ILO Convention No 190) (ILO, 2019a). It will also support an EU-wide communication campaign against gender stereotypes.

Tackling the gender pay gap and the barriers it creates will be at the heart of achieving equal economic independence. To this end, the EC drafted a proposal for a Directive to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms (OJ L 132, 2023). During the Slovenian Presidency, the European Council reached a general agreement paving the way for negotiations with the European Parliament and the final adoption of the Directive. The EC will make a special effort to encourage Member States to take measures to address vulnerable groups of women who are structurally under-represented in the labour market due to the intersectional dimension and circumstances that increase their vulnerability and marginalisation. In order to eliminate inequalities in the labour market, work-life balance will continue to be a major focus, in particular with regard to the implementation of the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers, which promotes the equal sharing of caring responsibilities between both parents (OJ L 188, 2019). The transposition of the Work-Life Balance Directive into the national legal system provides an important incentive and an increased opportunity to share parental responsibilities in couples where both partners work. It will help to counteract gender stereotypes and biases associated with the use of parental leave and, in the long term, lead to more men being involved in care work.

Promoting women's entrepreneurship and innovation, and women's participation in traditionally male-dominated sectors and professions are also important. Particular attention will be paid to ICT, where the share of women in the student population and in the workforce is extremely low.

In order to increase the number of women in senior management positions in companies, the EC has pushed for the adoption of a Directive on ensuring a balanced representation of directors in listed companies and related measures (OJ L 315, 2022). The EC also promotes women's participation in politics, including in the European Parliament elections in 2024. It aims to achieve gender balance (50%) at all its management levels by the end of 2024. The EC has also set up an Equality Task Force to ensure that the equality dimension, including gender equality, is taken into account at the operational and technical level of the EC's work.

The implementation of the Strategy will be based on a two-pronged approach, combining targeted measures to achieve gender equality and enhanced gender mainstreaming. The Commission will strengthen gender mainstreaming by systematically integrating a gender perspective into all phases of policy development in all areas, in both internal and external action.

The measures and objectives of the ReNPEMŽM23–30 follow the established European framework for action in the field of gender equality. Slovenia will strive to implement the objectives and measures set out in the EU Strategy for Gender Equality, tailored to the national context, in accordance with the decision of the Slovenian Government (Government Slovenia, 2020d), which supported the adoption of the EU Strategy for Gender Equality for the period 2020-2025, as Slovenia considers such a European strategy to be key to achieving the objectives of gender equality policy at the level of the EU and its Member States, and in particular to the implementation of Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It stipulates that in all its activities, the Union should aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women (OJ C 202, 2016). The measures and objectives of the new National Programme for Equal Opportunities of Men and Women follow the established European framework for action in the field of gender equality.

The implementation of the strategy in the Member States is checked by the EC in regular annual progress reports to the EU Member States.

Gender Equality Strategy 2018–2023

The Council of Europe Strategy identifies six strategic areas or objectives (Council of Europe, 2018):

- Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism;
- Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence;
- Ensure the equal access of women to justice;
- Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making;
- Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls;
- Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.

In each of these areas, the Council of Europe indicates the measures it will take during the period of implementation of the Strategy. In the area of combating stereotypes, the Council of Europe adopted in 2019 a *Recommendation on Preventing and Combating Sexism*, which provides the first international definition of sexism and sets out the measures that member states should take to effectively tackle the phenomenon in both public and private life (Council of Europe, 2019).

With regard to balanced representation, the Council of Europe Strategy focuses in particular on removing barriers to balanced representation in politics, on promoting and supporting measures that facilitate women's participation in politics, on empowering women candidates and elected women, including those belonging to marginalised groups, and on enhanced cooperation with all relevant stakeholders in order to achieve the set target shares in politics and other areas of public life.

The protection of the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women concerns in particular measures relating to the prevention of gender-based violence, including rape and sexual harassment, trafficking in human beings, and measures relating to economic empowerment or integration into European societies and labour markets in accordance with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2011), the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (Council of Europe, 2006), and

the Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention) (Council of Europe, 2007).

With regard to gender mainstreaming, the Council of Europe has adopted a number of recommendations in various areas, including the health sector, the media, sport and culture (audio-visual sector), and health policy. There is also a strong focus on training staff on gender equality and promoting the collection of sex-disaggregated data.

The Council of Europe, like the EU, prepares regular annual reports on the implementation of the Strategy's objectives in the Member States.

The Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action

These two documents remain the fundamental international standard and global commitment for achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and the exercise of women's rights (UN, 1995). The Beijing Platform for Action states that gender balance and gender mainstreaming are key to achieving gender equality. The Beijing Platform for Action contains twelve critical areas of concern for women; for each of them it identifies strategic objectives and measures to be taken by States Parties to achieve them. The latest review report on the implementation of the goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the conclusions of the 23rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing + 25) in Slovenia, drawn up by Slovenia on behalf of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, concludes that most of the challenges identified 25 years ago remain relevant (EIGE, 2020a), in particular:

- persistence of stereotypical beliefs and slowness in putting commitments into practice;
- persistent gender segregation in the labour market;
- wide gender care gap;
- weakness of institutional structures for gender equality;
- prevalence of sexual violence in all forms.

The Beijing + 25 Review Report also notes that new challenges have emerged in the recent period that Slovenia needs to address in the future, such as gender bias and artificial intelligence, new forms of violence against women and girls (cyber-violence), or reversing progress by going back to the past with organised campaigns against gender equality (EIGE, 2020a). The ReNPEMŽM23–30 largely follows the recommendations made on the challenges to be addressed in the coming period, taking into account the suggestions made by the ministries as institutions responsible for measures.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

The CEDAW is an international treaty for the protection of human rights and freedoms relating to women's human rights, comprising six parts, focusing on various aspects of the exclusion and restriction of women on the basis of their gender, and recommending a number of specific measures, including temporary measures, to advance substantive equality between women and men in a range of areas, from health, education and the labour market to family planning. Slovenia is obliged under Article 18 of CEDAW to produce regular reports on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures it has taken to comply with the provisions of the Convention, as well as on the progress achieved (UN, 1992b).

At the 84th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (February 2023), Slovenia defended the seventh report. The Committee stressed, inter alia (UN, 2023):

- adoption of a comprehensive strategy to tackle discriminatory stereotypes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society;
- adoption of measures to strengthen the national mechanism for gender equality (in terms of staff and finance);
- adoption of temporary measures to promote women's equal participation in all areas covered by the Convention and at all levels where women are under-represented and disadvantaged;
- adoption of specific measures to improve the situation of disadvantaged groups of women, such as Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities, migrant women, refugee women, older women, etc.;
- improvement of measures to ensure more effective protection for women victims of violence, trafficking and prostitution;
- collection and analysis of data on all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls;
- strengthening the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of preventive healthcare programmes and ensuring access to healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health services, for women and girls from disadvantaged groups.

In line with the Committee's recommendations, the ReNPEMŽM23–30 focuses on strategic areas of employment, education, social assistance, business, politics and the like, aiming to improve the situation of women and girls in all their diversity in these areas. It also includes a cross-cutting perspective for some of the groups listed by the CEDAW (UN, 2023).

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In September 2015, all UN members adopted by common agreement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (hereinafter: the 2030 Agenda), which is a historical agreement of the international community to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, ensure progress, and protect the environment for today's and future generations. The 2030 Agenda connects the three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e. the economic, social and environmental dimensions. It covers five areas critical to human progress and environmental preservation (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership), which comprise the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that all countries of the world, including Slovenia, will be working towards up to 2030. One of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 5) is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (UN, 2015).

To achieve this goal, the following targets are defined:

- end all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere;
- eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation;
- eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation;
- recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate;
- ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life;
- ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the concluding documents of their review conferences;
- undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with domestic legislation;

- enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women;
- adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at all levels.

In developing indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals, Slovenia draws on the set of indicators developed by Eurostat for monitoring and measuring progress towards the achievement of the goals at EU level (Eurostat, 2020a).

Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)

To prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, the Council of Europe adopted in 2011 the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter: the Istanbul Convention), which was ratified by Slovenia in 2015 (MKPNZND, 2015). The Istanbul Convention is the first and most comprehensive international legal instrument that comprehensively sets out the obligations of the Parties to prevent violence against women, including domestic violence. Thus the Istanbul Convention provides a basis for various measures which put domestic violence and violence against women legally and factually within the wider framework of the fight against discrimination of women and for gender equality. It binds its Parties to an integrated approach to violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, which includes the prevention of violence, victim protection and support, the prosecution of perpetrators and integrated and coordinated action (Council of Europe, 2011).

The Istanbul Convention also envisages an important role for NGOs, as Article 9 of the Istanbul Convention requires Parties to establish effective cooperation with NGOs and civil society organisations and to involve them in the delivery of services and the formulation and evaluation of policies and measures (Council of Europe, 2011). Today, there are a number of NGOs working in the field of violence; in their respective areas and with their respective approaches, they actively contribute to the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence. The most important tasks of NGOs in providing specialised assistance to women victims of violence are telephone, in-person or electronic counselling, providing accommodation in safe houses, crisis centres and maternity homes, assistance with institutional procedures, legal assistance, social skills training for perpetrators, and raising public awareness of zero tolerance of violence in society through a range of prevention activities.

The Istanbul Convention is implemented in Slovenia in the following areas:

- preventing violent acts and raising awareness among professionals and the general public;
- protection and support for victims and perpetrators of acts of violence;
- monitoring of legislation;
- investigation, prosecution, procedural law and protective measures;
- migration and asylum.

Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention imposes on the Parties to designate or establish an official body responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the Convention (Council of Europe, 2011). To this end, a government inter-ministerial working group was set up in 2016 by a decision of the Slovenian Government; 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 the Istanbul Convention (Slovenian Government, 2016). The group brings together experts and representatives of

ministries, NGOs and institutions working in the field of prevention of violence against women and domestic violence.

Violence against women and domestic violence are among the most common human rights violations and the most common form of discrimination against women, which is why a proper approach by the state to regulating this area is of the utmost importance. Slovenia has made significant progress in this area over the last decade, as shown in the first report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention (MDDSZ, 2019). A number of measures have been implemented to improve the integrated treatment of victims of violence, as well as preventive awareness-raising activities for professionals and the general public. Slovenia submitted its first report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention to the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter: GREVIO) in 2019 (MDDSZ, 2019). GREVIO representatives visited Slovenia in 2020 as an opportunity to assess progress made in implementing the Convention's goals and standards by reviewing domestic legislation, policies and practices, and to identify problems and obstacles to women's full enjoyment of all their rights, with a view to making definitive recommendations to Slovenia on how to improve measures to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The first report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Slovenia with the recommendations of the GREVIO group to Slovenia was published by the Council of Europe in October 2021 (Council of Europe, 2021). The report concludes that while Slovenia has made significant progress in establishing a comprehensive legal, institutional and policy framework for the prevention of domestic violence, there has been less political attention, funding and political support for the other forms of violence against women addressed by the Convention. Therefore, one of the recommendations of the GREVIO group is that Slovenia's response to all forms of violence against women in the future should be holistic, i.e. taking into account all forms of violence against women (Council of Europe, 2021).

ILO Convention No 190 concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work

ILO Convention No 190 is the first international instrument to establish specific, universally applicable standards to address work-related harassment and violence and to define the measures to be taken by governments and other relevant actors (ILO, 2019a). Together with Recommendation No 206 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work, it provides a common framework for action: they aim to establish an inclusive, integrated and gender-sensitive approach to the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work (ILO, 2019b).

ILO Convention No 190 is also the first international standard to address work-related violence and harassment. It is based on recognition that violence and harassment in the world of work can constitute a human rights violation or abuse, and that violence and harassment is a threat to equal opportunities, unacceptable and incompatible with decent work. It stresses the importance of zero tolerance for violence and harassment, with the aim of preventing such behaviour and practices. Violence and harassment during, in connection with or as a result of work affect a person's mental, physical and sexual health, dignity and family and social environment. Countries ratifying the Convention are committed to adopting an inclusive and integrated approach, taking into account gender equality to prevent and eliminate work-related violence and harassment (ILO, 2019a).

In accordance with the position of Slovenia on the proposal for a Council Decision authorising Member States to ratify, in the interest of the EU, ILO Convention No 190 adopted by the Slovenian Government at its 62nd regular session held on 27. February 2020 (Slovenian Government, 2020c), following its adoption, Slovenia will seek ratification of the Convention, considering that it is necessary to have an international instrument that

comprehensively addresses the issue of violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment, and provides for effective measures to eliminate it and protect victims, and that violence and harassment in the world of work undermine equal opportunities, are unacceptable and incompatible with decent work (Slovenian Government, 2020c). The ILO Convention No 190 entered into force in June 2021. It becomes binding on the Member State one year after the date of registration of its ratification.

EU Gender Action Plan for the 2021–2025 period

The new Third Action Plan 2021–2025 (hereafter: GAP III) is the overarching policy framework through which the EU will promote gender equality and women's empowerment in its external action, or accelerate and consolidate the progress made on gender equality in the 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (EC, 2020a). It will enhance the EU's contribution to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality) in all EU internal and external policies, and Goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies across the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015).

GAP III is based on five pillars of action:

1. Promoting gender equality and mainstreaming it as a priority in all external policies and measures: 85% of all new measures throughout external relations will contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment by 2025;
2. shared strategic vision and close cooperation with Member States and partners at multilateral, regional and country level;
3. accelerating progress, focusing on the key thematic areas of engagement, including fighting against gender-based violence and promoting the economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls; a renewed emphasis on universal access to healthcare, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender equality in education, as well as on promoting equal participation and leadership; full integration of the Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and gender mainstreaming in new policy areas, such as the green transition and the digital transformation;
4. leading by example (calling on institutions to lead by example);
5. ensuring transparency of results (the EC, in cooperation with the EEAS, will monitor progress in the implementation of GAP III on an annual basis).

The Action Plan will promote a transformative and intersectional approach, with gender mainstreaming as a priority in external policies and measures. The aim is to address the structural causes of gender inequality and discrimination on the grounds of gender, including by actively involving men and boys in the fight against gender norms and stereotypes. To ensure that no one is left behind, the Action Plan addresses all cross-cutting dimensions of discrimination, with particular attention to women with barriers or a migrant background, and discrimination based on age or sexual orientation.

Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and related UNSC resolutions (Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security)

In 2000, the UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1325, which stresses the need to strengthen the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, in peace negotiations, in peace and security building and humanitarian action, in crisis, conflict and post-conflict areas of the world, and to effectively protect women from sexual and gender-based violence (UN, 2000a). UNSCR 1325 and the related nine resolutions together form Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security addresses the need for women's active and effective participation in peacebuilding efforts, as well as in preventing and addressing sexual violence in conflict. It also highlights the important role of men as active defenders of women's human rights (UN, 2000b).

Conflicts, crises and instability hinder progress towards sustainable peace and security and the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals. The 1325 Agenda on Women, Peace and Security focuses on the links between gender inequality and conflict and the ways in which they reinforce each other, and emphasises the need to understand gender inequality as a root cause and contributing factor to conflict and instability. The role of women in ensuring peace and security has received increasing attention at the national and global levels, especially following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda, which is central to sustainable development and a peaceful and just, inclusive and secure future society for all (UN, 2015).

In order to implement the UNSC resolutions on women, peace and security, Slovenia has already crafted two National Action Plans at the national level since 2010, which have brought together various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders relevant for the implementation of Agenda 1325 on women, peace and security and for gender mainstreaming in the areas of peace and security and their activities, thus strengthening the effectiveness of the implementation of these resolutions abroad and at home (Slovenian Government, 2010, and Slovenian Government, 2018a).

EU Strategic Approach on Women, Peace and Security

Gender equality, peace, security, development and human rights are closely interlinked. The EU's priority is to increase women's participation in all matters related to peace and security.

Building on the EU's strategic approach to women, peace and security, the EU will implement the Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which sets out clear objectives and benchmarks to be met under the key priority areas of: (i) prevention, (ii) protection, (iii) relief and recovery, and three general and cross-cutting principles (iv) participation, (v) gender mainstreaming, and (vi) leading by example (Council of the EU, 2019).

The EU will pursue its objectives on women, peace and security through, inter alia, the political and diplomatic efforts of EU leaders, gender mainstreaming and ensuring women's inclusion and leadership in all peace and security-related activities. It has also taken specific measures, including promoting the deployment of women in CSDP operations and missions, through targeted training of military, police, judicial and security forces (Council of the EU, 2019). Increased participation of women in CSDP operations and missions will also be part of the next cycle of civilian CSDP capacity development.

Monitoring and reporting on women, peace and security will be aligned with GAP III, including integration of the EU policy on women, peace and security fully into the overall EU policy framework on gender equality.

1.5 National strategic documents

Slovenian Development Strategy 2030

The fundamental strategic document of Slovenia, which is the overarching framework for the development of the country and shows the future situation in Slovenia, is the *Slovenian Development Strategy 2030* (hereinafter: the SDS 2030). With five strategic orientations and twelve interlinked development goals, it lays the foundations for Slovenia's long-term development. Each goal is also linked to the sustainable development goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. Key areas which have to be worked on in order to achieve a high quality of life for all are defined for each development goal. The goals constitute a basis for designing the priority tasks and measures to be implemented by the Slovenian government,

regional development stakeholders, local communities and other stakeholders (Slovenian Government, 2017b).

Gender equality is a cross-cutting principle in the SDS 2030, as it is mainstreamed in all policies and objectives, in particular in:

Goal 1 – a healthy and active life. As one of the key challenges in creating the conditions for a high-quality life, it identifies reducing health inequalities; to achieve this, ensuring equal opportunities and gender equality, enabling independent living, social inclusion and reconciling work, caring responsibilities and leisure activities across the lifespan are also important. The target value for the performance indicator *years of healthy life expectancy at birth* for 2030 is 64.5 years for both sexes, with a different baseline value: 58.8 years for men and 57.7 for women. The gender gap means that women are in poorer health for most of their lives. Another important performance indicator under this goal is the *Gender Equality Index* – the target for 2030 is 78 (against the baseline value of 68.4).

Goal 2 – knowledge and skills for quality of life and work. This objective underlines the importance of reducing the gap between the skills acquired and the different needs of employers, in particular the demand for a highly educated workforce, with an emphasis on empowering the population to use the latest technologies or increasing digital literacy, thereby reducing the digital divide. An important performance indicator is the *share of the population with tertiary education (25-64 years)*, with a target value for both women and men being 35% against the baseline value of 30.4%. The gender gap in tertiary education is an important indicator, as men lag significantly behind women in tertiary attainment. There is also a gender gap in STEM occupations, which are strongly male-dominated.

Goal 3 – a decent life for all. This goal focuses on creating an environment in which all people can enjoy the benefits of social development, regardless of their personal circumstances, by working to reduce poverty and material deprivation and to eliminate all forms of discrimination, in particular by eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls and domestic violence. The target value for the indicator on the *level of risk of social exclusion* is 16% (2030) against the baseline of 18.4% (2016). The target value for the *experience of discrimination* indicator for 2030 is 10% (against the baseline of 13%).

Goal 7 – an inclusive labour market and high-quality jobs. This goal highlights the importance of creating the conditions for higher incomes, better quality jobs and a more inclusive society. The goal will be achieved in part by creating high-quality jobs which generate high value added, are environmentally responsible and provide conditions for adequate pay and a high-quality work environment; promoting the increased inclusion of marginalised and underrepresented groups on the labour market; promoting employer activities designed to improve employees' physical and mental health, occupational health and safety and make it easier to balance work and care responsibilities; promoting the employment of both women and men in gender atypical and shortage occupations. The target value for the performance indicator on the labour force participation rate of the population (20-64 years) is 75%, with a baseline of 70.1% for both women and men (2016).

Goal 10 – a trustworthy legal system. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and legal certainty and the rule of law are among the key factors of the quality of a democracy and social development. The goal will be achieved by protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms, eliminating discrimination and providing equal opportunities at the national, regional and global level.

Goal 11 – a safe and globally responsible Slovenia. Slovenia is a globally responsible and solidarity-based country that actively strives to promote peace, security and

stability, respect for human rights and international law, and to collectively address global challenges such as migration flows, terrorism, climate change and respect for human rights.

Long-lived Society Strategy

The *Long-Lived Society Strategy*, which is the substantive framework for making the necessary adjustments and changes in the face of demographic change, also addresses themes that are key to tackling inequalities between women and men (UMAR, 2017).

The Strategy highlights the risk of poverty among older people, which is higher in women and further increases with age, and warns that demographic change could exacerbate this problem, which will be a barrier to greater inclusion of older people in society. Precarious forms of employment in the labour market, which will also affect systems of social protection and social security of individuals, will have to be addressed. Greater uncertainty in the labour market and more atypical (also precarious) forms of work are, in addition to demographic changes, important factors that demand that systems of social protection be adapted to provide a sustainable transition between different stages of life. Women (especially young women) are more likely to be involved in atypical or precarious forms of work.

Measures directed at promoting a healthy lifestyle and preventive healthcare programmes have an important impact on the quality of life, and improve the long-term sustainability of social protection systems. An unhealthy lifestyle starts to evolve in the earliest period of life, and is more common in more socio-economically vulnerable social groups, with education and gender also being important factors. As regards health inequalities, Slovenia is notable for its major differences between men with low and high levels of education. Inequalities in health also cause inequalities in handicaps in daily activities and are the main reason for a low number of years of healthy life.

The strategy also addresses discrimination and various forms of violence (psychological, physical and economic) against older people, the majority of whom are women. Violence has serious health and social consequences for the individual and for society, while at the same time it is poorly investigated, frequently undetected and rarely reported. The competent ministries will draw up action plans with specific proposals for solutions to implement the guidelines laid down in the Strategy.

Other relevant national strategic documents underpinning the measures identified in the ReNPEMŽM23–30, by thematic area:

Resolution on the National Social Assistance Programme (ReNPSV) 2022–2030

The ReNPSV22–30 sets out the baselines for the functioning and development of the social assistance system over the period. It defines the objectives and activities to achieve these objectives, defines the development of social assistance services and programmes, defines the way in which the Resolution will be implemented and monitored, and defines the resources (human and financial) for the implementation of the objectives of the Resolution and the planned development of services and programmes (ReNPSV22–30, 2022).

Measures and activities within the social assistance system are planned and implemented in line with the basic principles of social assistance work, which include gender equality.

Guidelines for the Implementation of AEP Measures for the 2021–2025 Period

The Active Employment Policy (hereinafter: the AEP) covers measures in the labour market aimed at increasing employment and reducing unemployment, enhancing the employability of persons in the labour market, and increasing the competitiveness and flexibility of employers. The EAP measures are targeted primarily at the most vulnerable groups in the labour market, such as young people, older people, long-term unemployed and recipients of social assistance. The Slovenian Government adopted the AEP Guidelines for the 2021–2025 period in January 2021 (Slovenian Government, 2020e).

Resolution on the National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women 2023–2028 (in preparation)

The Resolution is a strategic document defining objectives, measures and key policy operators for the prevention and reduction of domestic violence and violence against women in Slovenia. The new strategic document extends the scope to all forms of violence against women, as it is expected to include measures to implement the provisions of the Istanbul Convention (ReNPPNDNŽ23–28, 2023).

Resolution on Family Policy 2018–2028

The Resolution on Family Policy sets out fundamental family policy objectives and measures to improve the quality of family life. Reconciliation of work and family life is an important part of family policy and is of key importance for the creation and enforcement of equal opportunities of women and men in society, which are systematically included in almost all substantive chapters, in particular in chapters that deal with the labour market and employment, family support programmes, social assistance to families, parental protection and family benefits, healthcare, upbringing, care and education. Measures to facilitate the reconciliation of these obligations should be taken and implemented by the state, municipalities and employers (ReDP18-28, 2015).

Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities 2022–2030

The purpose of this programme of action is to promote, protect and ensure full and equal exercise of all human rights by persons with disabilities, and to foster respect for their inherent dignity. The Programme includes 13 basic goals with a total of 120 measures, comprehensively covering all aspects of disabled persons' lives and referring to the 2022–2030 period. Women, older people and children are particularly vulnerable to violence and discrimination in society, so they are given special attention in the implementation of the goal to prevent violence and discrimination. The new Action Plan also pays special attention to the intersectional perspective – women with barriers in the context of preventing violence and discrimination (Slovenian Government, 2021a).

Resolution on the national programme for the prevention and suppression of crime 2019–2023

The Resolution continues the efforts to uphold the commitments and standards already adopted in security policy, with the fundamental objective of effectively designing and implementing policies to prevent and suppress crime, or to ensure a social environment that will have a long-term impact on reducing crime, and ensure security, living and work in a safe environment and so forth. Among the areas of crime prevention and suppression, violence against women also receives special attention (ReNPPZK19–23, 2019).

Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the 2023–2024 Period

The Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings defines the specific tasks of the national working group in the fields of legislation, prevention, detection,

investigation and prosecution of crime, assistance to and protection of victims, and cooperation within regional and international organisations (Slovenian Government, 2023a).

In Slovenia, human trafficking is still most frequently recognised for the purposes of sexual exploitation or exploitation of prostitution, whereas other forms of exploitation are more rarely identified. In Slovenia, victims of sexual exploitation are predominantly female. According to the European Commission, victims are most often trafficked for sexual exploitation (60%), with women and minors accounting for 72% of identified and suspected victims. The new Action Plan foresees the implementation of basic activities to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings, which will take place both within the framework of the cooperation of the competent state bodies and through the involvement of non-governmental and humanitarian organisations in various prevention activities and assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings (Slovenian Government, 2023a).

Resolution on the National Programme for Higher Education up to 2030

The Resolution on the National Programme for Higher Education up to 2030 (hereafter: NPEH 2030) is the key strategic document for the formulation of objectives, criteria, measures and policies in the field of Slovenian higher education (ReNPVŠ30, 2022).

In accordance with the NPVŠ 2030, Slovenia's higher education area in 2030 will be distinguished by innovation, teaching, research and artistic excellence, growing quality on an international scale, stimulating working and study conditions, high standards of academic culture and ethics, responsiveness to current and future needs of the commercial and non-commercial sectors and social environment in general, respect for institutional autonomy, social responsibility, integrity and trust, equality and non-discrimination, dignity, justice and inclusiveness, and commitment to the comprehensive and effective creation of favourable conditions for the welfare of society (ReNPVŠ30, 2022).

Resolution on the Slovenian Scientific Research and Innovation Strategy 2030

The Slovenian Science, Research and Innovation Strategy 2030 (hereinafter: SRIS 2030) is a key strategic document in the field of research, development and innovation, which will be the basis for policy-making in the areas of social, economic and sustainable development and societal challenges (ReZrIS30, 2022).

Ensuring gender equality in research and innovation is an important horizontal objective of the resolution and will be pursued through various activities. Among other things, SRIS 2030 foresees the introduction of gender equality plans as a mandatory strategic document for research and innovation institutions receiving public funding; promotion of the design of mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence at the level of research organisations; taking gender equality objectives into account in the evaluation of research organisations in the context of funding; taking gender equality into account in research funding, including by mainstreaming the topic in the content of research activities; ensuring gender equality in the remuneration and appointment of working bodies; ensuring gender-disaggregated data (ReZrIS30, 2022).

Digital Slovenia 2030

Digital Slovenia 2030 is a strategic document aimed at planning the promotion of Slovenia's digital transformation in the development period up to 2030. The document addresses six priority areas, including digital competences and inclusion, which highlights reducing the gender gap in ICT as one of its goals. The Strategy lists the goal under Article 2 of the Promotion of Digital Inclusion Act, i.e. to increase interest in secondary, short-cycle and higher education programmes that include professional digital competences and to strive

to reduce gender gaps in this area. In this context, it is crucial that girls in particular are encouraged to participate in ICT education from an early age (Slovenian Government, 2023b).

Resolution on the National Programme of Health and Safety at Work 2018–2027

The purpose of this National Programme is to connect all stakeholders in the system of health and safety at work in order to join forces and cooperate in the realisation of the generally accepted vision in the field of health and safety at work in Slovenia, according to their best abilities and in compliance with their mission: to create and maintain a working environment that keeps workers healthy throughout their working lives. The Resolution highlights the gender perspective as an important factor for effective management of occupational safety and health (ReNPVHS18–27, 2018).

Resolution on the National Programme on Nutrition and Physical Activity for Health 2015–2025

The Resolution is aimed at improving the nutritional and physical activity habits of the population – from the early years until old age. All the measures and activities resulting from this document contribute to the reduction of health inequalities; introduce systemic solutions that include specific measures for particular target groups of the population, while paying special attention to populations at risk; advocate the principle of accessibility and affordability, in particular by ensuring that healthy choices are affordable and accessible to all citizens, regardless of their socio-economic, demographic and cultural characteristics, and by taking into account their specific needs, social disparities, and gender equality (ReNPPTDZ, 2015).

Resolution on the National Healthcare Plan 2016–2025

This resolution is a document that addresses the key problems in the field of health and the healthcare system in Slovenia and lays the foundations for health in all policies. It specifically addresses health inequalities or the specific health care needs and opportunities of vulnerable populations (ReNPHC16–25, 2016).

Strategy for the Prevention and Control of HIV Infections 2017–2025

The National Strategy for the Prevention and Control of HIV Infections identifies four priority areas for action: preventing HIV infection, ensuring early identification of infections, preventing transmission, treatment and prophylaxis, and preventing stigma and discrimination and empowering people living with HIV. It contains systemic measures to improve the sexual and reproductive health of the population, aimed at preventing and identifying sexually transmitted infections, taking into account the specific needs of the target group of men who have sex with men (Slovenian Government, 2017a).

Resolution on the National Mental Health Programme 2018–2028

The Resolution on the National Mental Health Programme is the first strategic document in Slovenia to address the field of mental health in a comprehensive manner. Specific objectives include raising awareness of the mental health consequences of harmful alcohol use and preventing suicidal behaviour, especially among older people (ReNPDZ18–28, 2018).

Resolution on the National Programme on Illicit Drugs 2023–2030

The Resolution on the National Programme on Drugs is the country's strategic document linking the national activities in the field of prevention and treatment of illicit drug and alcohol addiction. Particular emphasis is placed on increased efforts to address the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women, who are also drug users and face specific problems in this respect (ReNPPD23–30, 2023).

Action Plans of Slovenia for the Implementation of UN SC Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

In order to implement Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, Slovenia adopted the First National Action Plan 2010-2015 (Slovenian Government, 2010) and the Second National Action Plan 2018-2020 (Slovenian Government, 2018a) in 2010. The National Action Plan brings together various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders relevant for the implementation of Agenda 1325 on women, peace and security and for gender mainstreaming in the areas of peace and security and their activities, thus strengthening the effectiveness of the implementation of these resolutions abroad and at home.

In each of the areas, the Action Plan includes, as appropriate, activities to address challenges for which gender mainstreaming has been identified in the previous period. These include conflict and post-conflict, migration, humanitarian crises, terrorism, violent extremism, climate change and so on. In Slovenia, significant progress has been made in all areas, which nevertheless remain a challenge and a commitment to strengthen activities for the period 2021-2030.

Resolution on the International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid of the Republic of Slovenia

The Resolution is the overarching strategic document of international development cooperation of Slovenia and includes priority areas and guidelines for the planning and implementation of international development cooperation, among which gender equality and women's empowerment are highlighted. This means that gender equality is not only addressed through specific activities or projects, but that gender mainstreaming needs to be ensured in needs analysis, preparation, planning, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of all international development cooperation and humanitarian aid policies (ReMRSHP, 2017).

Strategy of Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in international operations and missions

The basic principles and values that underlie the interest of Slovenia in participating in international operations and missions are the strengthening of international security, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, protection of particularly vulnerable groups such as children and women, the rule of law, effective multilateralism, accountability and solidarity, respect for international law, cooperation on the basis of equality and provision of equal opportunities. When planning participation in international operations and missions, consideration is given to the rationality of linking security activities with humanitarian and development activities, as well as with activities in support of human rights and freedoms (Slovenian Government, 2009).

Strategy of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid of the Republic of Slovenia for 2030

The International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Strategy is an implementing act of the Resolution on the International Development Cooperation and

Humanitarian Aid of the Republic of Slovenia. The resolution identifies gender equality as a cross-cutting theme for all international development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects. From 2017, all international development cooperation providers that have a funding agreement with the MZEZ are required to identify how gender is mainstreamed into project planning, implementation and monitoring when applying for a project and when reporting on its implementation. The gender perspective must also be strengthened in all activities funded by other government bodies (Slovenian Government, 2018c).

Feminist Foreign Policy Strategy of Slovenia (in preparation)

The Feminist Foreign Policy Strategy of Slovenia defines the strategic priority areas, objectives and activities of the foreign policy of Slovenia for the promotion of gender equality and strengthening rights and empowerment of women and girls. The Strategy defines partnerships with countries, international and regional organisations and other actors, including civil society. It also provides for the participation of Slovenia in bilateral or multilateral initiatives and for the political and diplomatic engagement of Slovenia at the international level. The thematic priority areas include peace and security; water and water diplomacy; climate change and food security; prevention of sexual and gender-based violence; sustainable development and humanitarian assistance; new technologies and digitisation; human rights; and strengthening effective multilateralism (MZEZ, 2023b).

Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia

In its response to crisis hotspots, Slovenia will pursue the Sustainable Development Goals within the framework of a comprehensive approach, and will focus its peacekeeping, development and humanitarian efforts on helping to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, thus making a concrete contribution to social development, peace, stability and security, strengthening the economy, and building open societies in developing countries (ReSNV-2, 2019).

National Programme of Measures of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Roma for 2021–2030

The National Programme of Measures of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Roma for the Period 2021–2030 (hereinafter: the NPUR 2021–2030) is a programme document of the government that sets out the main objectives and basic measures for improving the socio-economic situation of the Roma community and its members, for creating the conditions for raising the social inclusion of members of the Roma community and their empowerment, and for strengthening their participation in processes aimed at improving their position and achieving full inclusion and equality in Slovenian society in the period 2021–2030. One of the strategic goals of the NPUR for the period 2021–2030 is to address harmful practices in the Roma community, such as the flight of minors to harmful environments (so-called child marriages) and forced marriages and raising awareness of the harmfulness of these phenomena and the importance of action taken by the competent institutions (Slovenian Government, 2021b).

Programme for Children 2020–2025

This strategic document sets out fundamental objectives and measures in the areas of children's rights and their well-being and quality of life in the period 2020–2025. The programme emphasises the importance of promoting equality between girls and boys. Gender equality must also be ensured in career counselling, including methods and tools that help children choose the careers and pathways that best suit their aspirations and abilities. Priority areas of the Programme include a life free from violence, and the safety of children in the digital environment (Slovenian Government, 2020b).

National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

Through its National Action Plan, Slovenia aims to strengthen activities designed to ensure that human rights are respected in business activities throughout the value chain and to additionally develop cooperation between the state, businesses, business associations, unions, NGOs and other stakeholders. The Plan contains measures and recommendations to ensure the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UN, 2011). The Plan notes that in order to prevent discrimination, special attention should be paid to gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as to the rights of children, persons with and without disabilities, older people, homosexuals and other minorities, and therefore lists the prevention of discrimination and inequalities and the promotion of equal opportunities among its priorities (Slovenian Government, 2018b).

Government of the Republic of Slovenia Strategy on Migration 2018–2028

The Strategy is based on inter-ministerial integration and addresses migration in a multifaceted, comprehensive and long-term manner, focusing on a better understanding of all aspects of migration and the improvement of measures for their management. It also addresses the most vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied children and, in certain situations, women (Slovenian Government, 2019).

Resolution on the National Programme for Language Policy 2021–2025

The Resolution is a strategic document that sets out the key objectives and measures of the Slovenian language policy for the period 2021–2025 and identifies the institutions responsible for the planned measures. An important aspect of the fulfilment of language rights is the creation of conditions for tolerant and respectful communication. In all spheres of public life (education, media, business, etc.), Slovenia provides, through various incentives or regulatory mechanisms, a modus of communication that ensures for all social groups equal participation in society (non-discriminatory and inclusive use of language, respect for cultural diversity as reflected by language, etc.). The Resolution envisages training to upgrade the language competences of public employees, including raising awareness of the importance of non-discriminatory and inclusive use of language (ReNPJP21–25, 2021).

Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2022–2029

The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture (hereinafter: the ReNPK) is the fundamental strategic document for the field of culture set out by the Exercising of the Public Interest in Culture Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 77/07 – official consolidated version, 56/08, 4/10, 20/11, 111/13, 68/16, 61/17, 21/18 – ZNOrg, 3/22 – ZDeb and 105/22 – ZZNSPP). The priority objectives of the ReNPK are: to ensure cultural pluralism, freedom of expression and equal opportunities for creativity and cultural diversity, with particular attention to creating equal opportunities irrespective of gender, age, social status or other circumstances (ReNPK22–29, 2022).

1.6 Activities carried out and progress achieved in the period of the previous National Programme 2015–2020 in individual thematic areas

Two biennial periodic plans were formulated for the period 2015–2020: for 2016–2017 and for 2018–2019 (MDDSZ, 2016a and MDDSZ, 2018a). As the Resolution on the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men is implemented on the basis of biennial periodic plans, no one-year periodic plan was adopted for 2020, but it was

indicated for each activity or measure if the activity or measure would be implemented also in 2020.

In the first report on the implementation of the periodic plan for the implementation of the Resolution on the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015–2020, the institutions responsible for each measure (i.e. ministries, offices) identified the activities they carried out in order to achieve each measure in 2016 and 2017 (MDDSZ, 2018b).

To address the gender gap in the labour market, activities were carried out to promote female entrepreneurship with specific and measurable objectives, to tackle gender stereotypes in career choices, and to analyse the accessibility of the labour market for women and men. Activities were also carried out to increase the social inclusion of rural and peasant women in order to improve their working and living conditions, in particular by providing support to rural associations. To increase social inclusion and reduce the risk of poverty, Slovenia also implemented social assistance programmes with the active involvement of Roma women and ESF programmes to empower disadvantaged groups of women. To remove barriers to achieving a better work-life balance, activities have been carried out to strengthen occasional childcare services, to promote active fatherhood and to tackle stereotypes about women's and men's roles in society.

To tackle gender gaps and segregation in education and inequalities in science and research, activities were carried out to eliminate gender stereotypes in career choices, encourage and promote women in science and scientific research and analysis on gender equality. To tackle stereotypes in society, especially in the media, culture and sport, activities continued for updating curricula from a gender perspective, to promote equal opportunities for women and men in sport and to promote gender-sensitive language practices. A project to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of gender has been launched to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in prison.

In the area of women's and men's health, there has been a strong focus on screening for early detection of colorectal, breast and cervical cancer, and on improving reproductive health. To achieve zero tolerance of violence against women, activities were carried out to raise awareness of and identify violence against women, as well as programmes to help victims of violence. Gender mainstreaming in Slovenia's development, peacekeeping and other foreign policy initiatives has also been strengthened, and a number of activities have been carried out in support of efforts to promote gender equality at the international level, to eliminate sexual violence in conflict, and to ensure the inclusion of women in civilian and military IOM.

In 2016-2017, ministries and other responsible institutions and participating bodies implemented the above activities mainly by gender mainstreaming in all relevant programmes. This means that activities were carried out within the framework of existing programmes, but with a focus on reducing the gender gap and achieving gender equality. These activities were mostly not allocated additional funding but were carried out as part of regular activities. In 2016-2017, specific funding to promote gender equality was allocated in particular to some programmes and projects that promoted female entrepreneurship; projects to promote work-life balance, gender balance and active fatherhood; associations promoting greater social inclusion of rural and peasant women; social assistance programmes for the empowerment of disadvantaged groups of women, especially Roma women and migrant women; projects to protect and promote health; and projects implemented in the context of international development cooperation.

The Report on the Implementation of the Periodic Plan for the Implementation of the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

2015–2020 for 2018 and 2019 lists the measures and activities carried out by ministries and government departments in accordance with the periodic plan during the period (MDDSZ, 2020).

In the labour market, the focus was on promoting women's entrepreneurship: free training was provided to equip women with the skills they need to successfully enter entrepreneurship. Participants who successfully completed the training were eligible for a subsidy for self-employment. In the area of women's and men's health protection and promotion, the main focus was on the implementation of the SVIT, ZORA and DORA prevention programmes. The *Supporting Vulnerable Pregnant Women and Mothers* programme and a pilot screening of a target group of pregnant women six weeks after delivery for postnatal depression, anxiety, substance abuse and exposure to violence were also implemented. A major focus was on reducing the incidence of online violence and harassment of women and girls. A survey on the prevalence and identification of online harassment among young people in Slovenia and training were carried out, a handbook for police and judicial staff was created, workshops were carried out and a curriculum on online violence and harassment for young people and school staff was drafted. A media campaign was launched to raise awareness and increase knowledge to eliminate stereotypes and change attitudes towards online violence and harassment of women and girls, and a mobile app, Unclick, was launched to identify and prevent online violence and harassment (Faculty of Social Sciences, 2019).

In the field of social inclusion, short social activation programmes were implemented to improve the situation or strengthen the social inclusion of women from other cultural backgrounds and Roma women in the wider social environment. A public call for proposals was launched to co-finance social assistance programmes, and various workshops and lectures were held in multi-purpose Roma centres, also aimed at improving the situation of Roma women. A survey was also carried out and an international conference on the situation of rural women was organised. To eliminate gender stereotypes, training sessions were organised for teaching staff and the student population, and to raise awareness of gender-sensitive language use among different target groups, Guidelines for Using Gender-sensitive Language were published (Šauperl M., Dobrovoljc H., Jeram J., Gulič M., 2018). In 2018 and 2019, Slovenia was also very active in working for gender equality and the empowerment of women at the international level, including by organising events and taking initiatives. It also made efforts to strengthen the role of women in ensuring international peace and security and to protect women in conflict.

The reports show that gender is mainstreamed in sectoral policies, but not in all areas and in some areas much more than others. Activities were carried out mostly within existing programmes, but with a focus on reducing the gender gap and achieving gender equality. According to the ministries, these activities were mostly not allocated additional funding but were carried out within the existing budget lines dedicated to regular work. In 2018-2019, specific funding was also earmarked especially for the promotion of women's entrepreneurship, awareness-raising and knowledge-building activities on cyber-violence and cyber-harassment, social activation programmes, including for women from other cultural backgrounds and for Roma women, prevention programmes in the field of health and programmes to support vulnerable groups of pregnant women and mothers, associations in rural areas working to improve the working and living conditions of rural and peasant women, and projects implemented within the framework of international development cooperation.

The evaluation or assessment of the implementation of the objectives and measures for the implementation of the previous Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, as presented in the periodic reports, also shows that there are significant differences in the quality of the implementation of activities and the reporting on these activities in the different ministries. The reports are crucial for identifying

which objectives have been achieved and how, and which measures have proved effective, and are therefore an important basis for selecting new or maintaining the same objectives, measures and indicators when drafting a new resolution. Ministries have not sufficiently included a cross-cutting dimension to help address the needs of vulnerable groups in society. They focused mainly on areas where women were disadvantaged, and less on male-specific problems, without which gender equality cannot be expected to be achieved.

1.7 Key challenges and orientations in the period of the new National Programme 2023–2030 in individual thematic areas

Slovenia has set itself a big task in the SDS 2030: to improve the index by more than ten percentage points and to reach the index target of 78 points in 2030 (Slovenian Government, 2017b). This requires setting challenging targets, particularly in those areas that have remained a major challenge for a long time (segregation, the care gap, etc.), while at the same time improving where the situation has deteriorated again compared to previous results.

Equality between men and women is also indirectly affected by the socio-economic trends facing most developed European countries, which are dominated by demographics or ageing populations and changes in the labour market (increasing flexibility and atypical forms of work, precariousness and so on). Despite some measures to mitigate these effects, there are more negative effects for women, who are predominantly in temporary and part-time employment. Equalising the position of men and women also requires systemic measures to tackle the ageing of the population, promote the creation of quality jobs and ensure decent, safe and healthy work.

At work, there is still a gender gap in labour force participation rates and equal pay for work of equal value. Because women take on a much larger share of caring work than men, career progression and access to some professions that are still considered “male strongholds” is significantly more difficult for them.

Gender segregation is one of the main factors behind the gender pay gap in all sectors. The unjustified gender pay gap is indeed smaller than in other Member States, but there was a trend towards a widening gap up until 2019, after which it narrowed again. One of the major challenges is to reduce the gaps in the activities where the differences are greatest. In 2020, the largest pay gaps were in financial and insurance activities, at 24.2%, and in healthcare and social assistance, at 21.5% (SORS, 2022). To reduce the pay gap, Slovenia's efforts will focus on the transposition and implementation of the Directive to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms (OJ L 132, 2023).

Slovenia will need to do more to tackle segregation in education and thus in the labour market. The gender-biased valuation of work in gender-segregated activities makes the concentration of women and men in different sectors and activities one of the factors that exacerbate gender inequalities. For example, women are significantly under-represented in STEM and research curricula and professions, and in senior positions at all levels of education. On the other hand, women are clearly predominant in areas such as childcare and care for the elderly, early childhood education, social assistance, the health sector and unpaid work. As a result, men are significantly more likely to be in higher-value occupations involving new technologies or ICT. Slovenia is thus lagging behind in terms of its highly educated workforce, mainly due to the high share of tertiary-educated women, but at the same time the problem is to ensure a sufficiently large number of young people with the right skills to cope with the challenges of development. As IMAD notes in its development report,

with the expected increase in ICT skills needs, appropriate approaches are needed to increase the attractiveness of these professions for women. On the other hand, working conditions in female-dominated sectors also need to be improved (UMAR, 2020).

Reconciliation of work and family life represents an important part of family policy in Slovenia and is also of key importance for the enforcement of equal opportunities of women and men in society. Work-life balance is thus well established at the institutional level, but is made much more difficult by the fact that women still do significantly more unpaid work than men. Although women in Slovenia are present on the labour market in almost the same proportion as men, and most of them work full-time, they do most of the caring work (looking after the household, children, older people, the sick). The gender care gap has widened in the face of the pandemic, according to research, although younger generations of men are more involved in sharing care and household responsibilities (Eurofound, 2020). Increasing the role of men in childcare (in line with the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers (OJ L 188, 2019)) and other necessary care, and employers' support for family-friendly policies remain among the key challenges of the new resolution.

Developing a public long-term care network and providing formal care services that are affordable and locally accessible to all, with informal care only for those who explicitly want it, remains a priority. However, it is important to ensure that the care gap does not widen, as women already do most of the care work for the elderly.

Inequalities are also deepened by a growing number of global conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine, and other challenges and their consequences. In the labour market, more attention needs to be paid to measures to increase the employment of groups of women with additional marginalisation and vulnerabilities, to ensuring high-quality and secure jobs and to ensuring that work is properly valued.

Achieving gender balance in political, economic and other decision-making remains an unfinished task. Although Slovenia has made the most progress in the country rankings since 2005, precisely in terms of power, thanks to the introduction of a mandatory minimum gender quota on candidate lists, it has become clear that no real structural shifts have taken place in the years following adoption of the legislation introducing the so-called legislative quotas (EIGE, 2020d). It was not until 2022 that significant changes in decision-making positions in politics took place, with the highest number of women ever elected in national and local elections. Nevertheless, progress in decision-making positions in politics, especially at local level, remains very slow and far from balanced. Greater attention will also be needed to achieve balanced representation in companies. The adopted Directive on ensuring gender balance among directors of listed companies and related measures (OJ L 315, 2022) is an important commitment for companies adopting measures for a more gender-balanced structure of decision-making bodies.

One of the major challenges that needs more attention is the poverty of older women. The risk of poverty for older women is above the EU average: older women with a high at-risk-of-poverty rate are more likely to live in a single-member household and to have been employed in lower-paid occupations more often than men or have fewer years of working life, which is why their pensions are very low (Eurostat, 2022).

Zero tolerance of all forms of violence against women and girls remains one of the main orientations of the new National Programme. Violence against women and girls is one of the main obstacles to achieving equality between women and men and one of the most widespread human rights violations in Slovenia. The crisis situation created by the outbreak of the pandemic had an impact in terms of an increase in intimate partner violence, and highlighted the need for measures to specifically address the most vulnerable groups in society and to ensure that victims do not deal with violence and its consequences alone, or

with the help of friends and family. Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No 22/19, hereafter: ZKP-N) have made a significant contribution to putting the victim at the forefront, preventing or mitigating secondary victimisation, feelings of discomfort, fear and other unpleasant emotions, providing adequate information, referring the victim to relevant NGOs where necessary, explaining the possibilities of pursuing property and legal claims, providing free legal aid and other information needed by the victim. However, more needs to be done to prevent violence against women and to make access to justice even more victim-centred. The Istanbul Convention is the basis for standards to effectively combat violence against women. The new resolution will also focus on ensuring a quality, safe and healthy learning and working environment free from violence and harassment, in accordance with the provisions of ILO Convention No 190 (ILO, 2019a), and taking into account, as appropriate and in accordance with domestic law and existing domestic measures, the non-binding guidelines of the accompanying ILO Recommendation No 206 (ILO, 2019b).

There are also a number of challenges relating to health. Women have fewer healthy years of life on average than men, but live longer on average than men. Achieving a good quality of life for all generations will require raising awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles and mental health, preventing risky behaviour, especially among certain groups of men, strengthening prevention and reducing health inequalities, with particular attention to vulnerable groups of women and men with different personal circumstances. It is also necessary to strengthen the level of care for women's reproductive rights and health, to strengthen prevention, which is weak, particularly due to the shortage of gynaecologists at the primary level, and to pay particular attention to young people and to the preservation of the public health system in this regard. In terms of reproductive rights and women's health, girls and women from socially disadvantaged families are a particularly vulnerable group, and access to certain basic commodities, such as menstrual hygiene products, should be given special attention. Introducing free menstrual hygiene products in public facilities would help to prevent female poverty and break taboos and stigma around women's reproductive health.

In the area of foreign policy, Slovenia will continue to support efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to uphold high standards of human rights for women. To this end, a new foreign policy strategy will be drawn up, with feminist foreign policy as a cross-cutting theme. Ensuring successful gender mainstreaming in international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, as well as the implementation of the Agenda on Women, Peace and Security, will continue to be important challenges. Special attention will be paid to measures to protect women and girls from sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, crisis and modern security threats.

In addition, the principle of gender-differentiated impacts of climate change needs to be systematically recognised in the relevant legislation, in particular in the field of climate change and foreign policy. To this end, measures and policies should be developed that address the different gender-specific impacts of climate change and that contribute to improving gender equality in relation to the negative impacts of climate change.

Women working in the SV, police and/or civilian organisations involved in peacekeeping and involved in decision-making and action in this field, as well as women's organisations, have an important role to play as role models and intercultural mediators, and as an incentive for the empowerment of local women. Their experiences and good practices from other countries and multilateral stakeholders should be incorporated into the design of active measures at national level to promote participation and the deployment of women in international crisis management operations and missions.

1.8 Intersectional approach

The ReNPEMŽM23–30 addresses the inequalities (gaps) between women and men in Slovenia that hinder the realisation of the personal potentials of women and men, as well as economic progress, prosperity and competitiveness. Although statistics speak of women and men as two fundamental categories (social groups) and gender gaps, the cross-cutting aspect is also increasingly taken into account in data collection and analysis. Intersectional inequalities have thus been included in the EIGE Gender Equality Index as a specific satellite area (EIGE, 2022a), and increasing attention is also being paid to social minorities or marginalised groups within the gender category in various European and international contexts. They do not have the same problems because they are also affected by other personal circumstances such as sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ethnicity, race, class and so on, which can put them at a significant disadvantage within the same category. These groups, which have recently received increasing attention in documents aimed at improving the situation of women, include in particular women belonging to ethnic minorities (e.g. Roma women), women belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community, migrant women, refugees and asylum seekers, rural women, women with disabilities, young women, older women, especially women at higher risk of poverty, and so on.

Intersectionality is defined in EU documents as a cross-cutting principle to be taken into account in the implementation of the EU Gender Equality Strategy and, as defined by the EIGE, it is an analytical tool for examining, understanding and responding to the ways in which gender intersects with other personal circumstances and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination (EC, 2022a).

The most important documents to be taken into account in the implementation of the EU Gender Equality Strategy (EC, 2020d) from an intersectionality perspective include the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation 2020-2030 (EC, 2020e), the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (EC, 2020c), the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025 (EC, 2020b), and the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 (EC, 2021g).

A number of studies have highlighted the negative impact of the pandemic on certain groups of women, including women with a migrant background and experience (EC, 2022a). In May 2022, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation to protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, which addresses all the relevant areas and problems faced by women and girls in this situation, from adequate accommodation facilities, to health and social needs, violence against them, and equally importantly, to the establishment of gender-sensitive asylum policies. It provides guidance to Member States on women's needs in the areas of social services, employment, education and participation, with a view to public policies contributing to the integration and empowerment of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women (Council of Europe, 2022).

1.9 Strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender equality and gender mainstreaming in government policies and measures

Gender equality is a cross-cutting principle that must be taken into account at all stages of policy development. The specific situation of women and men in all their diversity must be taken into account in the design and planning, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of policies and measures, and they must be designed in such a way as to eliminate inequalities and contribute to the promotion of gender equality. A key method or strategy used to do this is what is called gender mainstreaming, or integrating a gender perspective into a country's policies and measures. It is a horizontal approach that addresses the different starting points and needs of women and men in all areas of society, and the

design and implementation of government policies and measures that contribute to creating equal gender opportunities.

The implementation of this strategy is legally binding on the Slovenian Government, ministries and self-governing local authorities. Article 11 of the ZEMŽM provides that in drawing up regulations and other measures that apply in the fields which are relevant for the establishment of equal opportunities, ministries shall take into consideration the gender equality perspective, work together with the ministry responsible for equal opportunities for this purpose and take into account its suggestions and opinions. To promote and implement gender equality, each ministry has a coordinator for equal opportunities for women and men, who carries out coordination, advisory and facilitation tasks. Some local self-governing authorities also have a coordinator for equal opportunities for women and men (ZEMŽM, 2002).

As the responsibility for integrating a gender perspective into a country's policies and measures lies with all the actors who formulate and implement them at all levels, they must be adequately trained and have the appropriate tools and methods at their disposal. Therefore, since the launch of this strategy at the end of the 1990s until the present day, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the production of information and training materials, the development of tools and methods for gender mainstreaming in policies and the national budget, and the provision of education and training. In the future, successful gender mainstreaming in government policies and measures will require further strengthening of the organisational structure and ensuring that these tools and methods are actually applied in practice.

It is also important to ensure that adequate institutional mechanisms are in place to prevent, detect and sanction discrimination on the grounds of gender. The Equality Ombudsman is the body that deals with cases of such discrimination, recommends measures to eliminate it and plays an important awareness-raising role in identifying and eliminating it. To fight discrimination more effectively and to strengthen the independence, resources and powers of equality bodies, two proposals for (EU) Directives on standards for equality bodies (EC, 2022c) will further strengthen and raise the profile of the role of the equality advocate.

1.9.1 Objectives, measures and indicators

OBJECTIVE

Gender mainstreaming in state policies and measures

MEASURE 1

Systematic gender mainstreaming in the policies and measures of ministries, including by promoting the monitoring, collection and consideration of gender-disaggregated data, carrying out the necessary analyses and research, and consideration of the gender dimension in strategic documents.

Responsible institutions and participants:

All ministries; SORS.

MEASURE 2

Consideration of the gender dimension in recovery and mitigation measures and policies in the inter- and post-crisis periods, especially in areas where inequalities are most acute.

Responsible institutions and participants:

All ministries.

MEASURE 3

Strengthening the institutional structures and technical basis to implement policies on equal opportunities for women and men.

Responsible institutions and participants:

All ministries.

MEASURE 4

Implementing activities and measures in the field of women's studies, including exploring the possibility of setting up a public research institute.

Responsible institution and participants:

MDDSZ; MVZI.

MEASURE 5

Organising gender equality workshops for civil servants, taking into account the intersectional approach and the situation of marginalised groups.

Responsible institutions/participants:

MDDSZ, MJU; MO, MNZ-P.

MEASURE 6

Strengthening the legislative and institutional framework and activities to prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender, including information and awareness-raising on possible remedies to improve women's access to justice.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

MEASURE 7

Assessing the impact of regulations on gender equality.

Responsible institution:

MJU.

MEASURE 8

Developing the technical basis for integrating a gender perspective into the public procurement system in a way that takes into account the situation and needs of both women and men and reduces gender inequality.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

MEASURE 9

Conducting education and training on gender equality and equal opportunities for decision-makers and the public administration.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

Indicators:

- number of activities carried out to strengthen the legislative framework and institutional structures for the implementation of policies on equal opportunities for women and men.
- number of education and training courses on gender equality and equal opportunities.

1.10 Financial framework

To move towards greater gender equality, the EC and most Member States have adopted a two-track strategy. This includes, on the one hand, the integration of a gender perspective into existing policies and measures (gender mainstreaming) in activities that are largely financed from available budgetary resources, and, on the other hand, the financing of

measures directly aimed at the empowerment of women and girls, for which specific resources are earmarked. Funding for the objectives and measures set out in the ReNPEMŽM23–30 will be provided from two sources:

- from the national budget as part of their regular work tasks, or from funds earmarked for the implementation of specific programmes;
- from EU funds: the funds will be provided within the new 2021–2027 Financial Framework.

Funding for the implementation of measures aimed at strengthening institutional mechanisms and gender mainstreaming in government action will mainly be provided from regular funding. In 2023, EUR 50,000 has been earmarked for the public call for co-financing projects by non-governmental organisations in the field of eliminating gender stereotypes in various areas of public life (BH 130089 - Non-governmental women's organisations). A gradual increase is foreseen for the co-financing of NGO projects in this field, so that the funds would amount to EUR 60,000 in 2024, increasing by EUR 10,000 each year thereafter, to reach EUR 120,000 in 2030. Other activities aimed at institutional strengthening and overcoming gender stereotypes will also be financed under BH 160123 – Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, for which EUR 30,000 is earmarked for 2023. The activities aimed at implementing measures in the field of science will be carried out under BH 575710 – Promotion of programmes, funding of reviews and expertise, and BH 180073 – EU Framework Programme projects – Foreign grant.

The resources allocated to the implementation of the measures in each thematic area will be further specified in the biennial periodic plans, and the indicative resources, or the amount of resources to be provided in the coming period in each area where it has been possible to specify them more precisely, are set out below. Most ministries will mainstream gender in their regular work, and measures will be implemented within existing programmes.

In the thematic area of *eliminating gender inequalities in employment and ensuring equal economic independence of women and men*, funding to increase the employment opportunities of vulnerable groups of women (including long-term unemployed women, women with disabilities, Roma women and women from other cultural backgrounds) will also be provided in the framework of AEP programmes aimed at promoting the employment of vulnerable groups and their training and education. Funding for the implementation of the AEP programmes is to be provided from the state budget within the framework of BH 4282 – Education and Training for Employment; BH 3595 – Employment Incentives Offered to Employers for the Creation of New Jobs and the Employment of Persons Who Are Difficult to Employ; and BH 3551 – Employment Incentives for Unemployed Persons. Based on the Plan for the Implementation of the AEP Programmes for the period 2023–2024, an indicative amount of EUR 24 million is foreseen from the state budget for AEP measures in 2023. The implementation of the AEP programmes is also supported by EU funding from the 2021–2027 Financial Framework, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the Climate Fund.

The promotion of women's entrepreneurship will be funded from the state budget under BH 172410 – Development of a supportive environment for small businesses, as well as under the new Financial Framework for the period 2021–2027. The resources will be further specified in the biennial periodic plans.

For the implementation of measures to promote and strengthen activities and projects for a more equal sharing of care and domestic work in the family, educational and other activities to raise awareness of gender stereotypes and to eliminate them in the area of the sharing of care and domestic work, and activities to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of active fatherhood, EUR 283,910.47 were allocated in 2021 and 2022 from the REC (EU) Programme (Dads in Action project) from BH 200033 – Dads in Action – EU and FP 200034 – Dads in Action – Slovenian participation. The resulting materials will be

disseminated to relevant stakeholders in the coming years. Activities to transpose and implement the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers (OJ L 315, 2022) will also be carried out from the regular budget funds for the implementation of family-related laws or the promotion of family policy measures. They will be used to raise awareness among parents (especially fathers) about their rights to reconcile work and family life.

Measures to promote quality jobs and close the gender gap in the labour market will be funded through the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021–2027 under the European Social Fund.

Measures to promote the social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups of women at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including the most deprived and children, will also be funded under the new Financial Framework 2021–2027 (specific objective – Social inclusion). In the area of social assistance programmes, the state budget will provide the funds for the implementation of measures under the programme 2004 Social Protection Programmes and Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, measure 2611-11-0036, Implementation and Co-financing of Social Protection Programmes, under the budget headings Public Verified Social Protection Programmes and Developmental and Experimental Social Protection Programmes.

Funding for the empowerment of rural women will be provided through the public call: Measure 3 – Support the activities of non-profit associations in the field of agriculture, forestry and rural areas under Strand A, for which rural women's associations can also apply for funding, and for which EUR 144,000 is available in 2023. The total amount of grants available for the public call for Measure 3 to support the activities of non-profit associations in the fields of agriculture, forestry and rural areas in 2023 is up to EUR 291,000. Funding for activities in this area will also be provided from BH 255610 – Support for professional events – and NDP 2330-20-0043 Support for interest grouping 2021-2025.

Measures in the thematic area *Reducing inequalities between women and men in education, science and culture and overcoming gender stereotypes in all areas* will be mostly implemented in the framework of regular tasks or budget funds available.

In the thematic area *Improving health and reducing health inequalities between women and men*, funding for measures in the framework of the co-financing of programmes in the field of public health will be provided from the government budget, namely from the public call for proposals for the co-financing of programmes for the protection and promotion of health, for which a total of EUR 10,849,559.50 is foreseen up until 2025. EUR 1,800,000 is earmarked for the area of nutrition and balanced physical activity (BH 180050 – National Nutrition and Physical Activity Action Plan, Measure No 2711-18-0005 – Health in the fields of nutrition and physical activity), EUR 966,299.26 is earmarked for the prevention of communicable diseases through vaccination, the control of HIV infection and other sexually transmitted infections (EUR 97,000 from BH 200035 – Vaccination, Measure No 2711-20-0002 – Measures to Control Communicable Diseases, and EUR 869,299.26 from BH 6855 – National AIDS Programmes, Measure No 2711-20-0002 – Measures to Control Communicable Diseases), EUR 4,400,000 is earmarked for the prevention of the use of licit and illicit drugs and non-chemical addictions and related harm (BH 7083 – Health Protection and Health Education Programmes), EUR 1,799,529.04 is earmarked for the promotion of mental health and psychosocial support (BH 221091 – Mental Health and Dementia Programmes), EUR 1,043,731.20 is earmarked for empowerment, awareness-raising and better health literacy for the management of chronic non-communicable diseases (BH 7083 – Health Protection and Health Education Programmes), and EUR 840,000 is earmarked for healthy lifestyles for young people (BH 7083 – Health Protection and Health Education Programmes).

In the thematic area of *preventing and combating all forms of violence*, activities and projects aimed at providing comprehensive and adequate support to victims of domestic violence and violence against women will be financed mainly from funds earmarked for the implementation of social assistance programmes in the field of violence and from other funds within the regular tasks of the ministries. The MDDSZ will allocate an estimated EUR 4,802,839.61 for violence prevention programmes in 2023.

In the thematic area of *Promoting gender balance*, funding for the implementation of measures will be provided from available budgetary resources. No specific funding is foreseen.

In the thematic area *Promoting gender equality and women's rights worldwide*, activities aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls will be financed from budget funds (regular work). Funding for projects of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid will be provided within the limits of the available government budget. This share is expected to increase to 60% by 2030, which should ensure a multifold increase, according to the Strategy for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (Slovenian Government, 2018c).

2. Thematic areas

2.1 Eliminating gender inequality in employment and ensuring the equal economic independence of women and men

2.1.1 Content description of the area

Closing the gender gap in the labour market and achieving equal economic independence for women and men are important to ensure gender equality and greater economic growth and prosperity. The same level of economic independence is at the heart of the EU's policies in this area and is an important indicator of women's real progress, enabling them to be economically independent while overcoming the barriers that prevent them from being treated as equals to men in the workplace.

Gender gaps in the labour market from an EU policy perspective mainly relate to differences in:

- employment rate;
- part-time or full-time, temporary and other "atypical" forms of employment;
- unpaid care work;
- access to financial/economic resources;
- representation in different professions and sectors, in different roles and positions;
- salaries and pensions;
- prospects for economic independence.

In recent years, the EU has made significant progress in women's labour market participation, with female labour force participation rates increasing in most Member States, except during the pandemic. In the EU, 69.4% of women were employed in 2022, compared to 80% of men (EC, 2023). The new EC strategy (EC, 2020d) pays particular attention to the inclusion of groups of women with different barriers. Some women are structurally under-represented in the labour market, for example women with foreign nationality or a migrant background, women from ethnic or religious minorities and so on. The Strategy notes that, on average, 69.7% of EU-born women and only 55.3% of women born outside the EU are in

employment (EC, 2020d). To reach the target of increasing the overall labour force participation rate to 78%, the EU aims to halve the gender employment gap in comparison to 2019, which means that women's employment will need to grow at least three times faster than men's. The EU notes the need to attract more women into the labour market through employment in emerging sectors such as platform work. The proportion of women in this sector has increased recently; the platform economy has created opportunities for women, but there is a significant gender gap in the types of tasks performed, to the detriment of women, and also the fact that they take on more caring tasks at home than men. In December 2021, a directive on improving working conditions in platform work was proposed that takes into account the gender dimension of these developments (EC, 2021b).

Women workers are disproportionately over-represented in service sectors and occupations characterised by lower status, fewer career opportunities, lower wages and greater exposure to various risks. The pandemic further exacerbated inequalities between women and men in almost all spheres of life, both inside and outside Europe. Women were most at risk in the fight against the pandemic, accounting for 76% of the health and social assistance workforce and 86% of the personal care workforce (EC, 2022a).

Occupational gender-based segregation is linked to a number of factors, such as differences in the social valuation of the knowledge, skills and abilities of people working in typically masculinised and typically feminised activities and occupations. It is also affected by differences arising from the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work, entry barriers and organisational culture and practices, as well as norms, attitudes and gender stereotypes. In the new strategy, the EC points out that women in the EU account for 10% of the workforce in construction and 25% of the workforce in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and transport, while men account for 25% of the workforce in education and 20% of the workforce in health and social assistance (EC, 2020d). More attention should be paid to promoting the inclusion of women in professions related to digitalisation and new technologies (EIGE, 2020b). According to the She Figures study, women make up only 24.9% of the self-employed in technical occupations. The gap is particularly large in ICT (She Figures, 2021).

Reconciling work and private life is recognised at the EU level as a priority for achieving gender equality, increasing women's participation in the labour market and promoting the sharing of care and household responsibilities between women and men. Policies aimed at improving coordination include a range of measures, such as the provision of affordable and quality childcare services and affordable and quality (formal) long-term care services for older people and other dependants, adequate paid maternity, paternity and parental leave and sickness absence pay for children, safe and flexible forms of work and employment and so on. All of this affects wage levels, career prospects and pension rights. Countries that maintain and develop policies for gender equality and equity in parenting and care responsibilities, and strengthen measures to facilitate the reconciliation of private, family and professional life, also create an enabling environment for the decision to have children. At the EU level, women are over-represented not only in childcare but also in caring for older people.

Barriers to women entering and staying in the labour market persist. They were particularly pronounced during the pandemic. In particular, women's employment has been shown to have relatively little impact on the stereotypical division of care and responsibilities between partners in the family. During the pandemic, the burden of childcare was borne mainly by women, regardless of their position in the labour market. Women worked part-time or were absent from work to a greater extent (EC, 2022a). As European studies show, the burden of caring responsibilities for women in general also increased during the pandemic, whether or not they worked at the workplace, which widened the gender gap in caring for children and the elderly. Thus, on average, women spent 62 hours per week on childcare (men 36 hours) and 23 hours per week on household chores (men 15 hours) (EC, 2021d).

The pattern was similar for caring for elderly parents or relatives with disabilities: in the first period of the shutdown of public life, women spent on average 4.5 hours per week caring for elderly family members or persons with disabilities, while men spent 2.8 hours (EC, 2022a).

The slow pace of change in the gender division of unpaid domestic and care work is a barrier to women's equal access to the labour market, equality in career progression and equal control over economic resources. Despite the legal option for both parents to take leave, the proportion of mothers taking parental leave is still disproportionately high compared to fathers everywhere in the EU. This is why the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers was adopted in 2019 to encourage women's participation in the labour market and flexible working arrangements, to increase the proportion of men taking family-related leave and to enable workers to take leave to care for relatives in need of support (OJ L 188, 2019). This legislative act was adopted to make it easier for parents and carers to reconcile work and private life and, on the other hand, for the benefit of companies, as it will make workers happier and more motivated.

European law has a long tradition of equal pay for work of equal value, since the founding members of the European Community laid the foundations for preventing discrimination in equal pay for equal work in the Treaty of Rome in 1957 (EU, 1957). However, the gender pay gap still exists in all Member States, regardless of average labour force participation rates, national social security models or gender equality legislation, and stood at 12.7% in 2021 (Eurostat, 2023).

In the long term, the gender pay gap affects women's quality of life, their higher risk of poverty and the persistence of a gender pension gap of almost 30% in the EU. As part of a broader package of measures and initiatives that address the root causes of the gender pay gap and work towards women's economic empowerment, the Directive to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms (OJ L132, 2023) was adopted, introducing new and more detailed rules for enforcing the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value for men and women. By setting standards for pay transparency in organisations and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, Member States will enable workers to identify and prove possible discrimination on the grounds of gender. The Directive is important because pay systems and job classifications are often gender-biased; women's and men's work is not valued equally or in a gender-neutral way; and certain professional skills, which are mostly considered to be women's skills, may be valued unequally.

In 2020, women in the EU earned on average 13% less per hour than men, and women's pensions were on average 29.4% lower than men's (Eurostat, 2023).

Labour market segregation, difficulties in reconciling work and private life, the undervaluing of work in so-called feminised industries, the undervaluing of women's skills in certain professions and jobs are just some of the complex causes of entrenched gender pay gaps. At the EU level, a specific Action Plan to tackle gender pay inequalities has been adopted (EC, 2017), which addresses the different causes of the gap and proposes appropriate action, and the above-mentioned Pay Transparency Directive was adopted in May 2023 (OJ L 132, 2023). The importance of equal pay for work of equal value is also underlined in the Action Plan for a European Pillar of Social Rights, which aims for equal opportunities and equal treatment for women and men in all areas (EC, 2021a).

Women are generally less likely to enter entrepreneurship, mainly because of traditional perceptions of gender roles, but also because of the greater difficulties they face in accessing finance, training, networking for income-generating activities and reconciling work and private life. As the EC points out, the share of women entrepreneurs in start-ups is far

from optimal and most women still do not see entrepreneurship as a suitable career option. The new EU strategy highlights that almost 92% of invested capital in Europe goes to companies founded by all-male groups (EC, 2020d).

Equal access to economic and financial resources is essential for achieving a wide range of economic impacts, including poverty reduction and greater social inclusion. Sectoral and occupational segregation and women's disproportionate participation in unpaid and part-time work contribute to the gender pay gap. This increases with age, which is also reflected in the gender pension gap and women's higher risk of poverty, especially at the start of their working lives and in older age. Special attention should also be paid to vulnerable groups such as young jobseekers, older women, single mothers, etc. Fighting poverty and sustainable development linked to gender equality are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015).

2.1.2 Situation in Slovenia

The labour force participation rate for women and men aged 20-64 was rising in recent years, until 2019, when it was 79.7% for men and 72.7% for women. In 2020, it declined due to the pandemic, reaching 78.6% for men and 72.4% for women. It then started to rise again, reaching 81.2% for men and 74.3% for women in 2022 (Eurostat, 2023). The gender gap was 6.9 percentage points, roughly unchanged from previous years. Women with foreign, non-EU citizenship have a lower labour force participation rate (63.7%), while men with foreign, non-EU citizenship have a higher rate (91.4%) (Eurostat, 2023). The number of people with disabilities in employment was also increasing slightly until 2019. In 2020, there was a slight decline, with 34,872 people with disabilities in the active working population, of whom just over half were women (17,913 or 51.4%) (SORS, 2023).

The unemployment rate for women and men aged 20-64 halved in recent years, reaching 4.4% (4.9% for women and 3.9% for men) in 2019. The pandemic led to an increase in the unemployment rate in 2020 (total 5.0%; 5.6% for women and 4.4% for men), but it already fell in 2021 (total 4.6%; 5.2% for women and 4.2% for men). In 2022, it fell even further (3.9% overall; 4.1% for women and 3.6% for men) and was lower than in 2019 (Eurostat, 2023).

AEP programmes made an important contribution to reducing unemployment. Long-term data show that the participation of unemployed women in AEP programmes is half (or more). In particular, there is a high representation of women in training and education programmes. In order to increase employment opportunities, the further inclusion of unemployed vulnerable groups of women in AEP should be further promoted. This can help them re-establish contact with the working environment or acquire additional skills that increase their employability (Slovenian Government, 2020e).

The share of women among the self-employed is lower, at 30.5% (Eurostat, 2023). The early entrepreneurship rate is also low, at 6.1% for women and 7.2% for men in 2021 (GEM, 2022).

Equalising the position of men and women in the labour market also requires systemic measures to ensure decent, safe and healthy work, including from the aspect of population ageing. Women are more likely than men to work part-time (11.8% of women, 4.9% of men) and to have a temporary job (11.8% of women, 9.1% of men) (Eurostat, 2023). Women's greater representation in non-standard or even precarious forms of work means that they are more likely to remain outside the applicable standards (for example, labour and social law) that guarantee decent work and a decent life for the individual.

Gender segregation in occupations and different sectors remains a problem. As regards occupations, the share of women exceeded that of men among specialists (58.1%), officials (61.2%), services and sales staff (61.7%), and among unskilled workers (52.7%); the lowest share of women was recorded in non-industrial occupations (9.1%) (SORS; 2023). Women predominate among staff employed in health and social work (78.3%), education (77.9%) and catering and tourism (58%); the construction (11.5%), water supply, sewage and waste management, environmental remediation (25.7%) and electricity, gas and steam supply (17.3%) sectors employ the fewest women. The share of women employed in the ICT sector is 29.9% (SORS).

Data for Slovenia show gender segregation in education and employment in the digital sector, with men accounting for more than 80% of those educated and employed in this field. The AEP is increasingly focusing on education and training in digital skills. Projects such as non-formal education and training, learning workshops and on-the-job training have been developed in direct response to labour market needs, where education and training programmes can provide unemployed people with the opportunity to acquire education or training for a specific job or profession. For some time now, these programmes have generally involved a greater number of women, and have also emphasised the importance of new digital skills (Slovenian Government, 2020e). Both in Europe and in Slovenia, the share of women in culture is higher than in the business sector as a whole, reflecting the service nature of the activity. According to the current data on the self-employed for 2023 maintained by the Ministry of Culture, 53.83% of the self-employed in culture are women and 46.16% are men (Ministry of Culture, 2023).

Traditionally, the military and the police have been considered “typically male occupational structures”. In the SV, the share of women in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 was 16.5%. It increased to 16.9% in 2021. Since the deployment of an SV unit abroad to an IOM in 1997, female members of the SV have been actively participating in and performing the tasks accepted by Slovenia under international treaties and agreements. Thus, in the last four years, the share of deployed female members of the SV (of all deployed SV members in an IOM) has increased from 8.2% to 10.3% (Ministry of Defence, 2023). The proportion of women in the police in relation to the number of employees in official authorised positions in 2017 was 17.1%, in 2018 17.4%, in 2019 17.4%, in 2020 17.8% and in 2021 18.5%. (MNZ-P, 2023). In the 2019–2021 period, the share increased by 1.3 percentage points. The proportion of employed women in clerical and professional/technical positions increased by 2.3 percentage points in the period 2012–2021, with the proportion of women exceeding 25% in 2015 and 26% in 2020 (MNZ-P, 2023).

Women on average earn less than men and their average pensions are also much lower, which is reflected in women's higher risk of poverty. The gender pay gap amounted to 3.1% in 2020 and significantly decreased compared to 2019, when it amounted to 7.9% (Eurostat, 2023). The gender pay gap in favour of men is largest in finance and insurance activities (24.2%), health and social assistance (21.5%), and information and communication (16.2%). In terms of occupational groups, the gap is largest in developers of multimedia solutions (38.9%), legislators, high-ranking officials and members of company boards (36.6%), and operators of mining process machines and devices at 36.5% (SORS, 2023). The gender pension gap is significantly higher than the gender pay gap and amounts to 16.3% between female and male pension recipients over 65 (Eurostat, 2023). Women are more at risk of poverty than men, especially older women. The poverty risk rate for women over 75 is 30.5%, and for men 14.6% (Eurostat, 2023).

Measures of social inclusion and empowerment of vulnerable target groups, which are carried out within the framework of the programmes and activities of the MDDSZ, contribute to increasing social inclusion and reducing the risk of poverty. These activities include the implementation of social activation projects. Individuals from vulnerable target

groups are included in social activation (SA) programmes to strengthen social, functional and work competences, social networks and with the aim of increasing motivation and empowerment to enter or approach the labour market. These programmes contribute comprehensively to tackling social exclusion and the risk of poverty, and to improving the employability of programme participants through measures and activities. In doing so, a strong emphasis is placed on recognising and taking into account the complex dimensions of the social and other issues of the individuals involved in the programmes, who often face social exclusion in several areas, and also associated more complex problems such as health problems, addiction problems, physical and mental disabilities, homelessness, etc. One of the important objectives of social activation projects is to strengthen the cooperation of various stakeholders in the local or regional environment who are actively involved in work with people from vulnerable target groups who are included in the programmes, such as the competent Social Work Centre (CSD), the Employment Service of the Republic of Slovenia, NGOs, educational and health institutions and other stakeholders, in order to identify as widely as possible the problems of the participants and to find ways of integrating them into a wide range of programmes or into the labour market. In the implementation of social activation projects, special attention is paid to women from other cultural backgrounds with language barriers and to Roma women, for whom special social activation programmes are implemented (programmes of Packages 2 and 3). In the implementation of the latter, particular emphasis is placed on strengthening their social inclusion in the wider social environment, increasing their motivation, strengthening their existing and acquiring new social and functional competences to deal with their specific and particular life and social circumstances, which place them in a situation of dependency and limit their opportunities for inclusion and integration in the wider social environment.

The unequal division of labour in the private sphere is an obstacle to equal opportunities in the labour market. Although men are increasingly involved in childcare and other family responsibilities (e.g. housework), there is still a large gender gap in the number of hours of paid and unpaid work. On average, women in the Republic of Slovenia do 234 minutes of paid work and 286 minutes of unpaid work per day, while men do 300 minutes of paid work and "only" 166 minutes of unpaid work compared to women (OECD, 2020). On average, women spend just over 200 hours more per year on housework than men, and just over 500 hours more on childcare. During the pandemic, as elsewhere in Europe, the gender gap in the number of hours of paid and unpaid work widened in Slovenia (Eurofound, 2023).

A survey on labour market accessibility for women and men (Kanjuro-Mrčela, Uhan, Kurdija, Mikič, Vovk, 2016) showed that traditional attitudes prevail in Slovenian society, especially among men, regarding the sharing of responsibilities between partners. Thus, 21.4% of male respondents (strongly) agree with the statement that a woman should be willing to reduce the amount of her paid work in favour of her family, while far fewer women (14.1%) agree with this statement.

Despite the possibility for parents to share parental leave equally, it is mostly women who take it. In 2021, parental leave took 25,495 women and only 860 men. Paternity leave was taken by 23,906 men, and the first 15 days of paternity leave were taken by just over 89% of all fathers, for an average of 13½ days (MDDSZ, 2022). The distribution of care for sick family members is also very unequal: 82% of all sick leave days in 2021 were taken by women, compared with 18% by men (NIJZ, 2022).

The amendments to the Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act, which transposes the European Directive into Slovenian law, equalise the arrangements so that both parents will have 60 days of non-transferable parental leave each (previously only the mother had 30 days of non-transferable leave), thus ensuring a more equal division of care work between the parents and giving mothers more equal opportunities on the labour market. The new regime applies to parents of children born after 1 April 2023 (the Parental Protection

and Family Benefits Act (2014) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], Nos 26/14, 90/15, 75/17 – ZUPJS-G, 14/18, 81/19, 158/20, 92/21 and 153/22).

2.1.3 Objectives, measures and indicators

Objectives:

1. Promote equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in the labour market, with a focus on vulnerable groups of women exposed to intersectional inequalities.
2. Desegregate the labour market.
3. Reduce the gender pay and pension gap.
4. Share the care work more equally between both parents.
5. Reduce gender gaps in exposure to the risk of poverty and social exclusion, with a focus on vulnerable groups of women exposed to intersectional inequalities.

OBJECTIVE 1

Promote equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in the labour market, with a focus on vulnerable groups of women exposed to intersectional inequalities

MEASURE 1

Promote the work and social inclusion and improve the skills and work skills of the most vulnerable groups of women through social activation and other social assistance programmes, in particular Roma women and women from other cultural backgrounds.

Responsible institution / participants:

MDDSZ and providers of social assistance programmes.

MEASURE 2

Work with vulnerable groups of women using social fieldwork and other appropriate approaches (e.g. intercultural mediation).

Responsible institution / participants:

MDDSZ; and providers of social assistance programmes.

MEASURE 3

Promote the employment opportunities of vulnerable groups of women (long-term unemployed women, women with disabilities, Roma women, women from other cultural backgrounds) through participation in active employment policy and other programmes.

Responsible institution / participants:

MDDSZ; and the Employment Service of Slovenia.

MEASURE 4

Support projects to provide greater employment opportunities in the labour market for members of minority ethnic communities, immigrants, persons with disabilities and the multiply vulnerable in raising the level of skills, cultural creativity and strengthen competences and social inclusion in the wider social environment.

Responsible institution:

MK.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to promote equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in the labour market, including the number of projects supported targeting different vulnerable groups of women exposed to intersectional inequalities;
- labour force participation rates by gender and age groups;

- number and share of women among employed persons with disabilities;
- employment rate of foreign citizens, by gender;
- unemployment rate by gender and age group;
- share of women in the SV and the Police.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Desegregate the labour market

MEASURE 1

Adequate valuation of care work and professions essential for the delivery of key societal functions (public administration, education, social assistance and welfare, public health and safety) and for the maintenance of ecosystem services.

Responsible institution:

MJU and MDDSZ.

MEASURE 2

Promote women's and youth entrepreneurship through the implementation of specific projects and programmes aimed at encouraging and facilitating the entry of women and youth into entrepreneurship and measures for growth and development after the establishment of the enterprise, which may include promotional events, training and/or mentoring for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, and provision of financial resources to facilitate the start-up and initial operation of the enterprise.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MGTS, Public Agency SPIRIT Slovenia and other project implementers and programme providers.

MEASURE 3

Create supportive environments that enable girls and boys to make gender-atypical career choices with the aim of desegregating the labour market, in particular by supporting and implementing awareness-raising campaigns and projects to encourage and enthuse young people about STEM and ICT professions.

Responsible institution and participants:

MDDSZ; MVI, MVZI and MDP.

MEASURE 4

Encourage women to join the military and police professions and ensure equal opportunities in military and police careers.

Responsible institution:

MO and MNZ-P.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to promote the inclusion of women in STEM and ICT professions, sectors and entrepreneurship and the inclusion of men and women in gender-atypical professions and sectors;
- persons in employment by main occupational group and gender;
- share of women among the population in employment by economic activity;
- number of women and young people involved in activities to start a business;
- labour force participation rate of persons with tertiary education by gender and age group;
- early entrepreneurial activity rate;
- share of women in the SV and the Police.

OBJECTIVE 3

Reduce the gender gap in wages and pensions.

MEASURE 1

Establish a legal framework to improve pay transparency and enforcement of the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value and setting up relevant monitoring mechanisms to strengthen the effectiveness of legal protection in cases of infringements.

Responsible institution and participants:

MDDSZ; MJU, MF and SURS.

MEASURE 2

Identify and eliminate the causes of the gender gap in wages and pensions to prevent the risk of poverty in old age.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

MEASURE 3

Create the conditions for staying longer in employment and entering the labour market more quickly, while promoting more stable forms of employment (quality jobs) and ensuring decent, safe and healthy work to reduce the gender gap.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

MEASURE 4

Examine the impact of gender on career dynamics (e.g. parental leave, family care, difficult conditions for breaking into the international field, participation in residency programmes abroad, etc.) and, in the light of the findings, design appropriate measures in the framework of the reform of the status of the self-employed in culture.

Responsible institution:

MK.

Indicators:

- number of activities carried out to improve wage transparency, close the gender gap and create conditions for quality jobs;
- gender pay gap (the so-called 'unexplained gap');
- the gender pension gap.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Share the care work more equally between both parents or partners

MEASURE 1

Promote social responsibility projects to raise awareness of family-friendly policies and practices that facilitate and support working parents in harmonisation of business and private life.

Responsible institution and participants:

MDDSZ; MO, MNZ-P and MZEZ.

MEASURE 2

Promote the implementation of activities and projects to strengthen a more equal sharing of care and domestic work within the family and to establish and strengthen educational, cultural, artistic and other activities to raise awareness of gender stereotypes and to eliminate them in the area of care and domestic work.

Responsible institution and participants:

MDDSZ; MZ and MK.

MEASURE 3

Examine the situation in the field of maintenance, maintenance allowances, assignment of children to care and education and parental care, and adopt legislative changes and other systemic solutions with a view to improving the quality of life of children.

Responsible institution and participants:
MDDSZ; and MVZ.

MEASURE 4

Develop and strengthen the activities and projects to improve the quality of life of older people, contributing to relieving the burden of caring work in the family or to facilitating the reconciliation of work and private life of family members and other informal carers of the older people.

Responsible institution and participants:
MSP and MZ.

MEASURE 5

Promote and strengthen activities to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of active fatherhood.

Responsible institution and participants:
MDDSZ; MZ and primary health care centres.

MEASURE 6

Provide direct support to workers and employers in the use of more flexible ways of organising work.

Responsible institution:
MDDSZ.

MEASURE 7

Establish measures to eliminate the effects of inequalities in the sharing of care and domestic work for individuals working in the field of culture and the arts.

Responsible institution:
MK.

MEASURE 8

Encourage the implementation of activities and projects to strengthen a more equal sharing of care and domestic work within the family and to establish and strengthen activities that carry out domestic work at social level, in particular by expanding the system of public non-profit canteens.

Responsible institution and participants:
MDDSZ; and MKGP.

Indicators:

- number of activities carried out aimed at a more equal sharing of care work between parents or partners;
- the work activity rate by gender and by number and age of children;
- share of part-time workers by gender and age group;
- number of fathers taking paternity leave;
- number of fathers taking parental leave and childcare leave;
- share of men taking leave to care for a sick family member;
- number of public non-profit canteens, which relieve parents of the burden of caring and domestic work.

OBJECTIVE 5

Reduce gender gaps in exposure to the risk of poverty and social exclusion, with a focus on vulnerable groups of women

MEASURE 1

Adopt measures and programmes to reduce the risk of poverty and social exclusion of the most vulnerable groups of women (women from other cultural backgrounds with language barriers, Roma women, older women, rural and other rural women, women with disabilities, women with more complex associated problems, self-employed cultural workers, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, etc.), and monitor of the impact of measures to reduce the risk of poverty and social exclusion for the groups of women most at risk of poverty.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MDDSZ, MKGP, MK and programme providers.

MEASURE 2

Examine the situation of social transfers in different types of families, in particular families with children living with only one parent, and adopt legislative changes and other systemic solutions with the aim of reducing the risk of poverty and increasing social inclusion.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

MEASURE 3

Strengthen the role of women in agriculture, with a focus on ensuring the promotion of women's rights in rural areas through the implementation of projects to promote the holding of professional events and the presentation of activities that contribute to the development of sustainable networking, important for the transfer of new knowledge and practices in agricultural production and processing.

Responsible institution:

MKGP.

MEASURE 4

Support for projects involving women's cultural activities or cultural activities aimed at women belonging to minority ethnic communities and immigrants and promoting their active involvement in social life, particularly in the field of culture.

Responsible institution:

MK.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to reduce gender disparities in exposure to the risk of poverty and social exclusion, including the number of projects supported targeting vulnerable groups of women and the number of beneficiaries supported;
- level of risk of poverty by gender and age groups;
- at-risk-of-poverty rate by work activity status, by gender;
- at-risk-of-poverty rate by household type;
- material deprivation rate by gender;
- number of social assistance beneficiaries by gender;
- poverty risk rate among foreign nationals.

2.2 Reducing inequalities between women and men in education, science and culture and overcoming gender stereotypes

2.2.1 Description of the area

Attitudes, beliefs and behavioural patterns are formed very early in life. Efforts to reinforce values such as gender equality, mutual respect and non-violence in interpersonal relations, non-stereotypical roles for women and men in formal and non-formal education create an environment that enables the development of personal potentials and strengthens personal integrity. If these values are transmitted to children, this can help them to become respectful and democratic citizens and to develop patterns and behaviours in line with the highest democratic standards.

In particular, EIGE highlights the following aspects of gender inequality in education (EIGE, 2017b):

- different choices in the choice of study courses based on gender stereotypes (segregation of study courses);
- disproportionate representation of women and men among educational and teaching staff according to the level of education (primary, secondary, tertiary), especially at the highest decision-making levels;
- gender stereotypes in education;
- gender-based violence and sexism (awareness-raising).

In the field of education, there have been many positive developments in gender equality in Europe and in Slovenia in recent years, as women's educational attainment has increased at all levels and women now generally have a higher level of education than men (Eurostat, 2023). However, women still face unequal access to research positions, funding, publications and academic prizes, and are also disadvantaged by rigid promotion and recognition criteria, especially for young women scientists. Women's academic careers are still heavily influenced by vertical segregation, and women are still markedly underrepresented in the highest academic and managerial positions in scientific institutions and universities. Similar barriers are faced by their female counterparts in art academies. This points to the emergence of a glass ceiling, i.e. invisible barriers based on prejudice that limit women's promotion to positions of responsibility (EC, 2020d). With the new R&D funding framework, the EC has introduced a new rule that requires public institutions wishing to apply for Horizon Europe calls to have a gender equality plan in place (MVZI, 2021b). This plan includes important areas such as equal opportunities for gender in recruitment and career advancement, gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions, work-life balance within the organisational culture, integration of the gender dimension in research and studies, and measures to prevent gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

In the context of gender inclusion and equality in the European education area, the EC is committed to working to overcome gender stereotypes in education and to address gender-specific themes such as cyber violence and sexual harassment, to which girls and women are particularly exposed (EC, 2020d).

Although the social sciences are as necessary as the natural and technical sciences in modern society, and their research findings no less scientific and useful, especially in terms of international and interdisciplinary integration, they are often neglected and undervalued. This differentiation is also reflected in the level of gender differences in the choice of fields of study. Gender inequalities are also perpetuated or reinforced by stereotypes concerning educational and career options and orientations (EC, 2020d).

Gender differences in the choice of study fields are not just a matter of personal preference, but are based on the perception that some areas of education are more "suitable" for women or men. Data and research show that girls, through years of schooling, lose interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects and are less likely to pursue a university degree in these fields. As a result, women are extremely under-

represented in STEM education, even though the need for STEM professionals is increasing. But even in sectors and professions where women predominate, they find it hard to break into the top jobs. Women are on average more represented in lower-status jobs that are equated with care work (such as teaching in kindergartens and primary schools), while men are more numerous in higher-status, better-paid jobs (higher up the academic hierarchy) that have a greater influence on decision-making (EIGE, 2017b).

Gender stereotypes and sexism are also a major barrier to realising gender equality and developing the potential of girls and boys, as they restrict them in their choice of courses of study and professions, and in making life decisions in general. Their elimination is key to reducing inequalities between women and men in education, training and science.

Textbooks contain many stereotypes about gender roles in society, stereotyping women in particular in professional settings. Related to gender stereotypes is the question of how to better integrate a gender perspective into the school curriculum or how to motivate male and female teachers or principals to make this a normal part of the curriculum at all levels of education.

Elimination of the consequences of society's tolerance of the various phenomena that generate gender inequalities, including gender-based violence, has brought the recognition and overcoming of gender stereotypes and sexism to the forefront of European efforts. In 2019, the Council of Europe adopted the first international instrument (Recommendation) to prevent and combat sexism, which also highlights the importance of zero tolerance of such phenomena in education (Council of Europe, 2019). This requires education, training and professional development for ministries and other stakeholders, strengthening cooperation between them, and developing methods and tools for gender mainstreaming in policies. This means that ministries need to ensure that measures and policies are systematically assessed from a gender perspective, or that the potential impact on the situation of women and men is taken into account in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and measures. The systematic mainstreaming of gender equality in all policies is a widely accepted practice or way of implementing gender equality policies in all EU countries, in line with European and international commitments. Numerous examples of good practice from other countries show that measures that incorporate the gender equality perspective as early as in the planning stage are more target-oriented and therefore more efficient. Gender equality must also be at the heart of post-pandemic recovery. The Regulation on the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism thus stipulates that gender equality and equal opportunities for all must be taken into account and promoted in the preparation and implementation of national recovery and resilience plans (EC, 2021h).

The EU expects Member States to take measures aimed at reducing gender segregation in education and training, in particular in science and ICT. In this context, the EU has paid more attention to gender inequalities and disparities in access to education and in tertiary education. In particular, it addressed the issue of how to reduce gender gaps in STEM, given the need for skilled men and women workers in science and technology to have greater opportunities to develop their personal potential, regardless of gender. Several Member States have set binding targets in this respect. Another important document at EU level is the Ljubljana Declaration on Gender Equality in Research and Innovation (IGRI, 2021a). The Declaration underlines the need to put gender equality in research and innovation at the heart of the new European Research Area, with the aim of ensuring that research and innovation policies across Europe are equitable and inclusive. Although girls outperform boys in computer literacy, women make up only 20 % of ICT graduates in the EU, while STEM graduates account for around 36 % (EC, 2022a).

2.2.2 Situation in the Republic of Slovenia

In secondary education, the gender imbalance is highest in ICT (4.8% of female students) and engineering, production technology and construction (11.24% of female students). On the other hand, female students dominate in teacher education (89.99%) and health and social work (75.9%) (SURS, 2023).

At the tertiary level, women predominate among graduates (60.3%). The largest share of graduates is in business, administration and law (12.5%), education (10%) and health and social work (9.7%) Men are most likely to graduate in engineering, production and manufacturing technology and construction (12.9%) and business, administration and law (6.5%) (SURS, 2023). Among the population aged 30-34, there are 59.1% of women and 36.8% of men who have tertiary education (Eurostat, 2023).

As women are predominant among graduates in education, they are also in the majority among primary (88.3%) and secondary (65.8%) school teachers. They are slightly fewer among managers in primary and secondary schools (75.2% and 59.3% respectively) (SURS, 2022).

At postgraduate level, the women and men are almost equal. Women accounted for 51.3% of doctoral degree holders (SURS, 2022). This is not reflected in the proportion of female researchers, which is 33.3% (Eurostat, 2022). There are also fewer women (46.7%) than men (53.3%) among higher education staff. Among full professors, the proportion of women is 33.9%, among associate professors 42.5% and among assistant professors 46.1% (SURS, 2022).

In the field of culture, gender inequality is also reflected in the proportion of male and female authorship in the artistic programmes of public cultural institutions. In the field of performing arts (analysis of the programmes of public institutions in the field of performing arts), in the seasons between 2015 and 2019, the proportion of plays written by female authors was only 26.27%, and women directed only 32.26% of the premieres. There is a noticeable pattern that women are more likely to direct secondary stage productions, reading productions or productions aimed at children and young people. Inequalities are also evident in the awarding of prizes for artistic achievement. The Prešeren Prize (awarded since 1947) has 8.89% women among its recipients, while the Prešeren Fund Prize (awarded since 1962) has 16.83% women (City of Women Festival, 2020).

2.2.3 Objectives, measures and indicators

Objectives:

1. Ensure equal opportunities for women and men in education and reduce gender segregation.
2. Reduce inequalities between women and men in science, research and culture.
3. Eliminate gender stereotypes and sexism in various fields.

OBJECTIVE 1

Ensure equal opportunities for women and men in education and reduce gender segregation

MEASURE 1

Incorporate gender equality themes in curricula, teaching materials and professional development programmes in the field of education and gender mainstreaming in teaching and extracurricular activities, taking into account diversity and intersectionality.

Responsible institution and participants:

MVI; the National Education Institute, CPI, the School for Leadership in Education, higher education institutions and civil society.

MEASURE 2

Include a greater proportion of women authors, artists and scientists in the curriculum contexts at primary and secondary levels and increase the proportion of women authors in the list of matura examination literature for the Slovene language.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MVI; the National Education Institute, CPI, the School for Leadership in Education, higher education institutions and civil society.

MEASURE 3

Encouraging gender-non-stereotypical choices of educational programmes and courses of study at all levels of education.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MVI, MVZI; the National Education Institute, CPI, NAKVIS, higher education institutions and implementing organisations.

MEASURE 4

Promote activities to reduce the gender gap in educational achievement at tertiary level.

Responsible institution:

MVZI.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in education and to reduce gender segregation;
- share of people with tertiary education in the 30–34 age group, by gender;
- share of female students in vocational and upper secondary education by field of study.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Reduce inequalities between women and men in science, research and culture

MEASURE 1

Support projects and programmes to increase women's participation in STEM and measures to reduce the digital gap or gender gap in ICT technologies.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MDP, MVI, MVZI; the National Education Institute and CPI.

MEASURE 2

Adopt measures to improve the position of women in science, research and culture and to reduce the gender gap, with a focus on cross-cutting inequalities.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MVZI, MDP, MK; the Commission for Equal Opportunities in Science, ARRS.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to reduce inequalities between women and men in science, research and culture;
- share of female doctoral graduates;
- share of female researchers;
- share of female full professors.

OBJECTIVE 3

Eliminate gender stereotypes and sexism in various fields

MEASURE 1

Systematically integrate themes on gender, gender equality and the recognition and overcoming of gender stereotypes and sexism into education and training for civil servants, which may also include cultural and artistic content.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MDDSZ, MJU, MO, MNZ-P, MZZ and MK.

MEASURE 2

Support initiatives and activities to eliminate sexist practices in various fields and to promote non-discriminatory, inclusive and gender-sensitive public use of language.

Responsible institutions and participants:

All ministries.

MEASURE 3

Co-financing of awareness-raising, cultural, artistic and educational projects by NGOs and self-employed in culture with the aim of eliminating gender stereotypes in various fields in order to achieve gender equality.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MDDSZ, MK, MJU; and MVZI.

MEASURE 4

Encourage public institutions to be more gender-balanced in their programming and to design programmes that support the elimination of gender stereotypes in different areas.

Responsible institution and participants:

MVZI, MK; the Slovenian Film Fund and the Slovenian Book Agency.

Indicators:

- number of activities carried out to eliminate gender stereotypes and sexism in various fields;
- monitoring of the state of efforts towards more gender-balanced programming and co-financing of projects by NGOs and the self-employed in culture.

2.3 Improving health and reducing health inequalities between women and men

2.3.1 Description of the area

Gender plays an important role in the incidence and prevalence of specific diseases, as well as in their treatment and impact on well-being and recovery. This is due to the interplay between biological differences between women and men and socio-economic and cultural factors that influence women's and men's behaviour and access to health services. Health research and health policy need to adequately address and take into account the web of social and biological factors that influence differences in women's and men's health. This can benefit both women and men in understanding health problems, appropriate prevention and appropriate treatment.

EU documents and recommendations specifically address these gender gaps and inequalities in health policy sectors (EC, 2020d):

- gender gaps in health status and risk behaviours;
- gender inequalities and barriers to access to health services, with a focus on disadvantaged or vulnerable groups - sexual and reproductive health;

- gender segregation;
- training and education of male and female health professionals on gender equality and gender-specific aspects.

Women generally live longer than men in all parts of Europe, but still have fewer years of healthy life. Some diseases, such as osteoporosis and eating disorders, affect both sexes but are more common in women. Others, such as endometriosis and cervical cancer, affect women exclusively. Men are more likely to get and die from lung and colorectal cancer, ischaemic heart disease and road accidents. Some diseases, such as prostate cancer, affect men exclusively (EIGE, 2017a).

In addition to biological factors, social norms also influence women's and men's health status differently. Women are less likely than men to engage in risky health behaviours and consequently face fewer associated diseases and disabilities. However, they are more likely than men to have "invisible" diseases and disabilities that are often not adequately recognised by the health system. Examples include depression, eating disorders, disabilities related to domestic accidents and sexual violence, as well as age-related illnesses and disabilities (EIGE, 2017a).

In general, it can be observed that women are more aware of their health status and are higher users of health services than men. In terms of lifestyle choices and risky behaviours, we observe that men are at higher risk of poor health. Men face higher levels of occupational exposure to physical and chemical hazards and risky behaviours associated with "masculine norms". We can talk about patterns of behaviour associated with masculinity; research finds that men are generally less likely to visit a doctor when they are ill. When they do go to the doctor, they are less likely to report symptoms of illness or disease. Men often or usually pay less attention to their health than women (EIGE, 2017a).

A key component of health is sexual and reproductive health, the cornerstone of which is the protection of women's and men's sexual and reproductive rights. Sexual and reproductive health means that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, to have children, and to freely choose if, when and how to do so. In addition, women and men must be well informed and have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable family planning methods of their choice, as well as to other legal methods of birth control and prevention of sexually transmitted infections. Good and comprehensive access to sexual and reproductive health information, including systematic sexuality education, must be provided to young people. Likewise, all should have access to health services for the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, and women must have the right to adequate quality health services that ensure safe pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period, and the possibility of safe termination of pregnancy. It is important that women's and men's reproductive health is adequately addressed in occupational safety and health risk assessments, which are a mandatory part of organisational policies.

Inequalities in access to healthcare can be caused by economic and other reasons, and different disadvantaged groups such as refugees, migrants, ethnic minorities, women and men with disabilities, men who have sex with other men, transgender people and older people need to be addressed. Measures must therefore be taken to improve access to disease prevention, health promotion and health services and to reduce inequalities between different social and age groups. Measures should aim at promoting and strengthening health, in particular healthy lifestyles, while at the same time preventing or reducing risky behaviours. Effective interventions must operate according to the principle of universal proportionality, which means that they address the entire target population, while at the same

time specific, targeted interventions are needed that are tailored to the needs and characteristics of the groups at risk.

The gender perspective is also an important component in occupational safety and health issues. The approach to ensuring occupational safety and health must take account of biological and social differences between women and men. In particular, differences in the work predominantly performed by men and women, the activities in which they work, working conditions and treatment in society have an impact on the occupational safety and health risks and the resulting hazards to which men and women are exposed in the workplace. These differences in the field of occupational safety and health are often not recognised and acknowledged in practice. They must be highlighted to help promote a culture of prevention and health and safety at work and to create quality jobs for all.

2.3.2 Situation in the Republic of Slovenia

Life expectancy at birth has slightly decreased during the covid-19 period, reaching 77.7 years for men and 83.8 years for women in 2021, while healthy life expectancy has increased, reaching 66.3 years for women and 63.9 years for men in 2020 (Eurostat, 2023). Women die most often from circulatory diseases, men from neoplasms. In 2017, the highest number of male (787) and female (458) deaths from cancer were due to cancer of the trachea and lung, while prostate cancer (464) and colon cancer (252) are also common in men, and breast cancer (433) and pancreatic cancer (194) in women (Zadnik and Žagar, 2023). Cancer screening programmes (ZORA, DORA, SVIT) make an important contribution to earlier detection of cancer and to reducing the number of cancer deaths. The response rate of men to participation in the Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme (SVIT) is approximately 10% lower than that of women over the entire implementation period. In 2019, a total of 60.1% of men and 70.7% of women that responded to the programme (NIJH, 2020).

A healthy lifestyle is one of the key factors that contribute to good health. It includes a healthy diet, sufficient exercise, sleep, and avoiding risky behaviours such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, irregular and excessive eating leading to obesity, stressful lifestyles and so on. Men eat less healthily than women because, regardless of their age, they are less likely to eat breakfast regularly than women, as well as vegetables, and more likely to add salt to their food and consume sugary drinks. The recommendations for adequate physical activity are met by 80% of Slovenia's adult population, but gender comparisons show that men are more active, although women are more likely to use active forms of transport to work or study. Men are more likely to engage in risky behaviours. In total, 25.2% of men and 20.9% of women smoke. Harmful use of alcohol is a distinctly risky behaviour for men, as the rates of excessive alcohol consumption are almost three times higher than for women, and men are much more likely to be high-risk drinkers than women. The accumulation of unhealthy lifestyle patterns increases the development of chronic non-communicable diseases. Men are more likely to have two or more risk factors than women. Women are more likely to experience stress and find it harder to cope than men. Trends show that stress related to relationships and workplace pressures in particular are on the rise (NIJH, 2020).

The suicide mortality rate is significantly higher for men (307) than for women (87). Men also die more often than women from road and other accidents and alcoholism (NIJZ, 2020).

Women are more likely than men to visit a doctor and are also more likely to be hospitalised. The all-cause hospitalisation rate was highest for men aged 80 years and over,

85 years and over for women, followed by the 0–4 age group, and lowest for men aged 20–29 years and for girls aged 7–9 years (NIJZ, 2020).

According to the data of the National Health Insurance Fund (ZZZS), as of 1 October 2020, there were 148.47 gynaecological teams at the primary level in Slovenia, with an average number of 4,512 women registered per gynaecologist, which exceeds the professional norm. In total, 55% of gynaecological teams work in health centres, 27% are concessionaires, and approximately 18% of gynaecological teams work in hospitals. Around 700,000 women over the age of 13 are registered with these gynaecological teams, which means that more than 200,000 women do not have a registered gynaecologist (ZZZS, 2023).

Vulnerable groups, who face a number of barriers to accessing health both at the systemic and individual levels, were also identified in the study "Analysis of Vulnerability and Inequalities in Health in Local Communities", which was carried out by the NIJZ in 25 settings in the Republic of Slovenia in 2018-2019: elderly, widowed women and men, rural women and immigrant women, women after divorce, women economically dependent on their husbands, Roma women, elderly single men, men and women without compulsory or supplementary health insurance, and so on (NIJZ, 2020).

NIJZ data on reported workplace injuries show that men, especially young, are more likely to be injured. In 2019, in total 13,926 workplace injuries were reported, 74% of which were men. Of those seriously injured at work, 83% were men. There were 15 fatalities at workplaces in the year, all of which involved male victims. In terms of age, the highest number of reported occupational injuries per 1,000 employees was in the 15-19 age group (57.6) and in the 20-24 age group (36.8). In all age groups, males predominated among the injured (NIJZ, 2022).

2.3.3 Objectives, measures and indicators

Objectives:

1. Protect and promote health and prevent occupational diseases and injuries, taking into account gender differences and the specific needs of vulnerable groups.
2. Reduce health inequalities and ensure equal access to quality and safe health services for vulnerable groups of women and men.
3. Promote and protect sexual and reproductive health, with a particular focus on adolescents and women in the perinatal period.

OBJECTIVE 1

Protect and promote health and prevent occupational diseases and injuries, taking into account gender differences and the specific needs of vulnerable groups

MEASURE 1

Implement activities and measures to promote and protect health and prevent disease with a specific targeted approach to vulnerable groups (e.g. women with disabilities, older women, unemployed women, migrant women, Roma women, women from other cultural backgrounds) in health and social care and local communities, using a community-based approach.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; MDDSZ, NIJZ, ZZZS, NGO and expert institutions.

MEASURE 2

Co-finance public health programmes in various fields (nutrition and physical activity for health, prevention of communicable diseases through vaccination, control of HIV and other

sexually transmitted infections, use of licit and illicit drugs and non-chemical addictions, chronic non-communicable diseases and mental health and healthy lifestyles of young people promotion).

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NGO and expert institutions.

MEASURE 3

Implement support programmes for different vulnerable groups of women (victims of violence, women detainees and convicts, women in prostitution, women addicted to illicit drugs) to strengthen mental health and ensure a holistic approach.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MZ, MP; URSIKS, NIJZ, Beli obroč Slovenije (White Ring of Slovenia – Society for Helping Crime Victims), Inštitut Stopinje (Institute for Logotherapy, Mediation, Education and Research), Društvo Ključ (Ključ Society - Centre for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings).

MEASURE 4

Implement activities and measures aimed at identifying the causes of non-participation and non-responsiveness of the male-dominated adult population in prevention programmes and at improving responsiveness in the use of health services and prevention programmes. Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NIJZ, FDV and University of Ljubljana.

MEASURE 5

Ensure occupational safety and health taking into account gender differences or diversity of workers.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

Indicators:

- number of activities carried out to protect and promote the health of women and men;
- number of co-financed programmes aimed at strengthening public health in various fields;
- the responsiveness to prevention programmes, by gender.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Reduce health inequalities and ensure equal access to quality and safe health services for vulnerable groups of women and men

MEASURE 1

Conduct research and tailored approaches in cancer screening programmes to increase the participation of vulnerable groups of women and men in screening and to reduce mortality from cancers that can be prevented or detected earlier through screening, when survival is higher (SVIT, DORA and ZORA national programmes).

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; and responsible institutions for cancer screening programmes (Institute of Oncology Ljubljana, NIJZ).

MEASURE 2

Train health workers to identify women at increased risk (vulnerable) for mental health problems, domestic violence and addictions, and to direct them to sources of support and treatment during pregnancy and after childbirth.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NIJZ and Association for Perinatal Medicine (SZD)

MEASURE 3

Implement the health education programme 'Preparation for childbirth and parenthood', including breastfeeding counselling to support women and families with specific postnatal problems, including content on cooperative parenting from birth and supportive parenting; partnerships for more equal participation of men and women in family life.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; MDDSZ and NIJZ.

MEASURE 4

Develop and implement targeted intensive psychosocial support programmes for vulnerable pregnant women and families with an infant to reduce health inequalities and prevent intergenerational transmission of vulnerability.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; MDDSZ, NIJZ and mental health centres.

MEASURE 5

Systemic implementation of addressing vulnerability and inequalities in health promotion centres in health centres with the participation of community partners and community care.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NIJZ, primary health care centres, health promotion centres and community health nursing.

MEASURE 6

Prevent HIV infection and related discrimination, stigma and inequalities by co-financing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections prevention programmes, including promotion of testing through counselling and treatment and peer support among men who have sex with men, empowerment of people living with HIV, and awareness raising among the general and professional public.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; AIDS Commission, NIJZ, Clinic for Infectious Diseases and Febrile Conditions of Ljubljana University Medical Centre, Institute of Microbiology and Immunology of Ljubljana Faculty of Medicine and NGOs.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to reduce health inequalities and ensure equal access to quality and safe health services for vulnerable groups of women and men;
- life expectancy at birth by gender;
- healthy life expectancy at birth by gender;
- population morbidity by type of disease and gender;
- population prevalence by cause of death and gender;
- population mortality by cause of death and gender;
- morbidity and mortality from cervical cancer, breast cancer and prostate cancer;
- number of suicides by gender and age.

OBJECTIVE 3

Promote and protect sexual and reproductive health, with a special focus on adolescents and women in the perinatal period

MEASURE 1

Ensure access to primary reproductive health care.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NIJZ, Association of Gynaecology in Primary Care SZD, ZZZS.

MEASURE 2

Provide activities to increase HPV vaccination for both women and men.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NIJZ, ZZZS, Communicable Diseases Centre and NGO.

MEASURE 3

Update the content of preventive reproductive health programmes, including the development and implementation of a youth-friendly reproductive health care model within primary reproductive health care services.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; NIJZ, ZZZS, Association of Primary Gynaecology SZD and Association for Perinatal Medicine SZD.

MEASURE 4

Development and implementation of awareness-raising and information programmes for young people on sexual and reproductive health and rights, including systematic education for healthy sexuality and gender equality in schools and school curricula.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MZ, MVI, MVZI; NIJZ and primary health care centres.

MEASURE 5

Continue to ensure access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable family planning methods, including the provision of free contraception and the right to choose freely how to have children under the compulsory health insurance.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZ; ZZZS, NIJZ.

Indicators:

- number of updated prevention programmes for sexual and reproductive health;
- the level of satisfaction and compliance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Standards for Improving the Quality of Maternal and Newborn Care in Maternity Hospitals (results of a survey on the quality of perinatal period care from the perspective of users and analysis of data from the Perinatal Information System of the Republic of Slovenia);
- the fertility rate;
- the maternal mortality rate;
- the perinatal mortality rate;
- the legal abortion rate by age group;
- number of abortions permitted;
- contraceptive use by type of contraceptive and age (proportion of young women and men aged 18-24 who used a condom at first sexual intercourse).

2.4 Preventing and combating all forms of violence against women

2.4.1 Description of the area

Violence against women and girls is a violation of fundamental human rights and among the most widespread forms of gender-based discrimination. It causes serious psychological, physical and economic harm to women, children, families, communities and society as a whole. Violence against women is gender-based and takes many forms; it is rooted in unequal power relations between women and men, which makes it disproportionately more often experienced by women. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women specifically draws attention to the prevention of violence against women in its General Recommendation No 19 (and General Recommendation No

35) on violence against women. It defines gender-based violence as a form of discrimination against women and emphasizes that violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace and constitutes a violation of women's rights and fundamental freedoms (UN, 1992a and UN, 2017).

It is important to stress that talking about "violence against women" does not mean ignoring the fact that men also experience violence, which must also be taken seriously. An important part of promoting a culture of non-violence in the private and public spheres is to educate boys and men about non-violence and to involve men in various initiatives aimed at preventing and combating all forms of gender-based violence (EC, 2022a).

Data from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) for 2021 show that the experiences of physical violence differ between women and men with regard to some key characteristics. Violence against women occurs in private settings and is systematically underreported, is usually of a sexual nature or involves elements of coercive control. Violence against men tends to occur in public settings, is non-sexual in nature and is mostly perpetrated by other men. Men are also much less likely to be victims of gender-based violence (FRA, 2021).

The Victims Directive, adopted in 2012, which sets minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime in the EU, makes specific reference to victims of gender-based violence, victims of sexual violence and victims of intimate partner violence (OJ L 315, 2012).

The Istanbul Convention, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2011, is the first legally binding instrument in Europe to comprehensively address the different forms of violence against women, such as psychological violence, stalking, physical violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment (Council of Europe, 2011). It puts the rights of the victim at the centre by providing measures such as:

- prevention of violence, combating discrimination, criminal justice measures to fight impunity;
- providing protection and assistance to victims, protection of children and asylum seekers and refugee women;
- putting in place risk assessment and risk assessment procedures through better data collection, including through awareness-raising campaigns or programmes, inter alia in cooperation with national human rights and equality authorities, civil society and NGOs.

Women and girls are still too often subjected to domestic violence, sexual harassment, psychological, physical and economic violence, stalking, sexual violence, rape, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, forced abortion and forced sterilisation, sexual exploitation and trafficking, and other forms of violence that constitute a gross violation of their human rights and dignity (EIGE, 2021b).

EIGE estimates that the cost of gender-based violence in the EU is EUR 366 billion per year (EIGE, 2021b), with EUR 289 billion (79%) for violence against women and EUR 175 billion for domestic and intimate partner violence. In addition, a study by the European Parliament's Research Service estimated the total cost of online harassment and cyberstalking of women at between EUR 49 billion and EUR 89.3 billion (EPRS, 2021).

The pandemic has exacerbated and exacerbated this situation, as social contacts have been limited and support networks for victims have been limited, making it difficult if not impossible to find immediate support. There has been an increase in the number of calls to

helplines, in the number of reports to law enforcement authorities and in the number of emergency protection orders issued in cases of violence (EC, 2022a).

In the EU context, two important documents are under discussion in the area of violence against women, namely the proposal for a Digital Services Regulation (DSA) and the proposal for a directive on violence against women and domestic violence (OJ L 277, 2022 and EC, 2022b). The main objective of the proposed DSA, as a horizontal Regulation, is to protect users from illegal goods, content or services and their fundamental rights online, including by addressing the risks of gender-based cyber-violence. The proposal respects the principle that whatever is illegal offline should also be illegal online. The Directive aims to improve the prevention of violence, strengthen protection and support for victims and facilitate their access to legal protection. The Directive defines certain forms of online violence as criminal offences and includes measures to protect and support victims to prevent it. In addition, to address the impact of the pandemic, the EU has committed to setting up a 24/7 helpline for victims of violence against women across the EU. (EC, 2022b).

Domestic violence against women and girls is a serious and widespread social problem throughout the world. During the pandemic, femicide and gender-based violence, including domestic violence, increased in many parts of the world. NGOs working directly with victims of violence have consistently warned that victims still rarely report violence, especially in insecure situations such as pandemics. In order to break the vicious cycle of silence and isolation of survivors of violence, it is necessary to ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted and appropriately sentenced, and that women and girls survivors of violence have adequate support and recognition within the justice system. In most cases of femicide, the perpetrators are spouses, ex-spouses, partners or ex-partners who have not come to terms with the breakdown of their marriage or relationship. Because in gender-based violence the victim often knows and in many cases depends on the perpetrator, there is also a fear of reporting violence. It is therefore crucial that the State takes steps to ensure that serious forms of violence are prosecuted *ex officio*.

Both women and men experience sexual violence, but the majority of victims are women and girls. The FRA report *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey* shows the prevalence of different forms of violence, including sexual violence, although most women often do not report violence and there is a lack of comparable data at EU level (FRA, 2014). Victim assistance programmes and education and training for police, social work centres, health personnel, NGOs, and teaching and counselling staff dealing with different forms of violence make an important contribution to better and more effective work with victims of violence. The cooperation of state institutions and non-governmental organisations plays an important role in these activities. The activities carried out contribute to improving the systemic treatment of victims of domestic violence and perpetrators of violent acts, with particular emphasis on the protection of vulnerable groups in society, while strengthening inter-ministerial and interdisciplinary cooperation.

One in ten women is also exposed to sexual harassment or stalking through new technologies. The fact is that more and more women and girls are victims of gender-based violence online and in social media, and concrete measures need to be taken to address these new forms of crime, including sexual blackmail, sexual recruitment and "revenge pornography", and to protect victims who are facing severe trauma, which can sometimes lead to suicide.

Globally, 23% of women have experienced online abuse or harassment, which can include receiving abusive or threatening messages or discovering abusive or threatening comments about themselves circulating online. Both women and men face online violence and harassment, but women are much more likely to be victims of such violence than is

perpetrated because of the gender of the victim, particularly sexual forms of online violence (EIGE, 2017c).

Recently, violence and harassment (sexual and gender-based violence and harassment) in the workplace have received a lot of attention within international organisations (in particular the ILO). Both types of violence constitute a serious violation of human rights, a major obstacle to decent work that respects integrity, ensures safety and health, and does not interfere with dignity, physical and mental integrity. At the same time, they are detrimental to the economy and to social progress, undermining the foundations of working relationships and reducing productivity. The EU Strategic Framework for Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027, adopted in June 2021, highlights the negative consequences of violence, harassment and discrimination at work, whether based on gender or other grounds. Women are disproportionately affected by violence in the workplace, where they are subjected to unequal power relations, low pay, insecure working conditions and other abuses. Around a third of women in the EU who have been sexually harassed have been harassed at work (EC, 2021f).

Women and girls are particularly vulnerable in conflict and emergency situations, when violence, extortion, trafficking, exploitation and many other forms of gender-based violence are exacerbated. There are increasing reports of trafficking, sexual violence, exploitation, rape and abuse in Ukraine and other conflict zones. Many women and girls in so-called safe countries, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups or marginalised sexual minorities, also face multiple forms of violence (UN, 2022). Almost half of the victims of trafficking in the EU are EU citizens. Women and girls are the main victims of trafficking (72%), and the majority of them are sexually exploited (60%). Rape and sexual violence are regularly used as weapons and tactics of war, with the war in Ukraine being no exception (EC, 2023).

The EU adopted the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) in April 2021, which addresses trafficking in human beings in a comprehensive way, from prevention to conviction. It emphasises the protection of victims at all stages and takes particular account of women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation (EC, 2021e).

Women such as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, women with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ women, Roma women, etc., who face intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination, are even more vulnerable in the context of violence and must be fully supported and protected and their fundamental rights respected. Under the Istanbul Convention, which comprehensively sets out the obligations of the Parties and the prevention of violence against women, including domestic violence, the reasons rooting in culture, customs, religion, traditions and so-called "honour" cannot be invoked to justify acts of violence against women.

2.4.2 Situation in the Republic of Slovenia

According to the FRA (2014) Europe-wide survey on violence against women, the proportion of women in Slovenia who have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence by a current partner since the age of 15 is 5% and by a former partner is 21%. The percentage of victims of psychological violence by a current partner is 20% and by an ex-partner 46%. In total, 14% of women have experienced stalking and 44% have experienced sexual harassment. Before the age of 15, in total 16% of girls had experienced some form of violence (physical, sexual or psychological) (FRA, 2014).

According to a more recent internationally comparable survey on personal safety in private settings, conducted by SURS in 2020, 22% of women and 16% of men have

experienced physical (including threats) or sexual violence since the age of 15 (SURs, 2022). Women are more likely than men to be victims of violence, which is repeated and has more serious consequences. Violence against women is mostly perpetrated by their intimate partners. In the case of intimate partner violence, the majority (three quarters) of victims are women. A higher proportion of women also experience violence outside the partner relationship, but there is not a significant gender gap: 51% of victims are women and 49% are men. Just under a third of women (28%) and a fifth of men (20%) with a (current or former) partner have ever been victims of at least one type of violence (threats, psychological, physical, sexual or economic violence) by their partner. The most common type of violence in partner relationships is psychological violence, experienced by 26.2% of women and 19.7% of men with a (current or former) partner. While sexual violence is the least common type of partner violence, however, women were 5.6 times more likely than men to be victims of such violence. Intimate partner violence is characterised by recurrence, serious consequences and a higher incidence among women. In total, 6.9% of women who experienced intimate partner violence reported physical injuries as a consequence of the violence, compared to 1.5% of men. Psychological consequences due to repeated intimate partner violence were reported by 6.2% of women and 1.1% of men; women were seven times more likely than men to fear for their lives during violence.

A survey conducted in 2019 by the Unclick project (FFW, 2019) found that among the primary school population (grades 7 to 9), 56% of female students and 50% of male students had experienced at least one form of online harassment in the previous school year. Among the secondary school population, 65% of female students and 55% of male students experienced at least one form of online harassment in the previous school year. The study also revealed that girls are more likely to perceive serious consequences (helplessness, depression, stress, fear) as a result of online harassment and that boys are the most common online harassers of both girls and boys (FDV, 2019).

The number of reports of violence against women increased slightly during the first measures of the pandemic. In 2020, the police dealt with 1,478 domestic violence offences where criminal charges were filed under Article 191 of the KZ-1 (Criminal Code-1), an increase of 10% compared to 1,336 in 2019 KZ-1, 2008). The majority of victims were adults, and 95% of suspects were males. In compliance with the 2020 measures, the Slovenian police launched weekly preventive awareness-raising campaigns with the intention and knowledge that, despite the "lockdown", the police will respond to any call, report or information about violence. It raised awareness that violence is unacceptable, that reporting violence is important for police action and that we must take action, not just be silent bystanders. In 2021, there were fewer reports of domestic violence, with 1287 reports (MNZ-P, 2023).

In terms of services to support victims and their relatives, the social welfare system in the Republic of Slovenia has a dense and regionally well-covered network of public services (social welfare services) and social assistance programmes. In recent years, a number of measures have been implemented to improve the comprehensive treatment of victims of domestic violence, as well as projects to expand the network of crisis centres, maternity homes and safe houses across Slovenia. Capacities to accommodate victims of violence are increasing. Among all social assistance programmes for violence prevention, 36 public programmes and two development programmes were co-financed in 2022, offering 420 beds to users throughout Slovenia. According to data from the annual or final reports of the providers of the social protection programmes - a total of 13 safe houses, shelters and crisis centres and eight maternity homes - the number of places in safe houses in 2022 was 254 and the number of places in maternity homes was 166. In addition, the MDDSZ co-financed 12 counselling centres for victims of violence, including one programme for telephone counselling and one programme for the prevention of violence against the elderly.

Over the past decade, Slovenia has made significant progress in addressing and preventing domestic violence. With the adoption of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 16/08, 68/16 and 54/17 - ZSV-H and 196/21 - ZDOsk), it adopted the Resolution on the National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence 2009-2014 (ReNPPND0914, 2009), which defines in detail the measures for the protection of victims; it has also adopted by-laws which define, at the operational level, the conduct of the various authorities and services in relation to the treatment of domestic violence: Rules on the organisation and work of multidisciplinary teams and regional services and on the activities of social work centres in dealing with domestic violence (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], No 31/09 and 42/17, 2009), the Rules on cooperation between the police and other authorities in the detection and prevention of domestic violence (MNZ-P, 2010), the Rules on procedures for dealing with domestic violence in the implementation of health activities (MZ, 2011) and the Rules on the Treatment of Domestic Violence for Educational Institutions (MVI, 2009). In addition, various guidelines and instructions for the functioning of institutions in the field of combating domestic violence have been prepared.

In 2008, the Criminal Code was adopted, which defines domestic violence as a criminal offence (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 50/12 - Official Consolidated Text, 6/16 - corr., 54/15, 38/16, 27/17, 23/20, 91/20, 95/21, 186/21, 105/22 - ZZNŠPP and 16/23), and in 2013, the Police Tasks And Powers Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], No 15/13, 23/15 - corr., 10/17, 46/19 - Constitutional Court decision, 47/19 and 153/21 - Constitutional Court decision), which supplemented the police powers in cases of ordering a restraining order with the detention of the offender who does not comply with such a restraining order. In 2015, the Criminal Code was amended to include two new forms of offences, namely stalking and forced marriage or the establishment of a similar union. In 2019, the Act Amending the Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], No 22/19) was adopted, which, among other things, transposed the so-called Victims' Rights Directive, which, with a new approach, puts the victim of the crime at the centre and emphasises the victim's needs perspective in criminal proceedings. In June 2021, the Criminal Code was amended with regard to the criminal offence of rape, which is now based on the modern model of consent (the "yes means yes" model) and no longer on the model of coercion.

All these normative measures have contributed to improving the systemic framework for preventing and combating all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence. In 2015, the Republic of Slovenia ratified the Istanbul Convention (MKPNZND, 2015), in 2019 it prepared its first national report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, and in 2020 it defended the report before the independent monitoring mechanism of the Council of Europe, GREVIO.

Measures and activities to address the minors running away to harmful environments and regarding the above mentioned arranged and forced marriages in the Roma community were included in the 2017-2021 NPUR and are also included in the 2021-2030 NPUR (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2021b). One of the main results of the implementation of these activities is the Handbook on the identification of early and forced marriages in the Roma community and on interventions in these cases, which was developed in cooperation with representatives of the relevant ministries, the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office, the police, the SCSD, representatives of NGOs and the Roma Community Council of the Republic of Slovenia, and published by the URSN (URSN, 2021). Following the publication of the manual, professional trainings and consultations with professionals in the regions or settings where such problems are perceived have been held, starting in 2022. The structure of the participants in these training courses is multidisciplinary, to allow for an effective exchange of experience between representatives of different institutions whose work has identified or could identify such phenomena. In particular,

representatives of CSDs, police, schools, prosecutors, the judiciary, NGOs and other institutions working in the local environment and dealing with the Roma community are invited to participate. These trainings and consultations will be continued and, if necessary, will be held for other experts and institutions, such as forensic experts and Roma assistants. In addition, activities are planned to raise awareness among the Roma community of the harmful effects of these phenomena.

In the area of combating trafficking in human beings, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia has co-financed a number of preventive awareness-raising projects implemented by NGOs and humanitarian organisations until 2020. The activities were aimed at the general public and also at vulnerable groups (adolescents and adolescent girls, potential victims of labour exploitation of violent acts, with a special focus on the protection of vulnerable groups, refugees and refugee women, and migrants, especially unaccompanied minors). In 2021, the Anti-Trafficking Service within the Ministry of the Interior, started systematic awareness-raising activities for children and adolescents in primary and secondary schools in all regions of the Republic of Slovenia. In regions with a Roma community, the risk of premature and forced marriages in connection with trafficking in human beings is also highlighted.

In addition to raising awareness among the general public and vulnerable groups, training will be provided to professionals working in the field of anti-trafficking. The Republic of Slovenia will continue its efforts to promote gender-sensitive and child-rights training for officials and all practitioners in contact with victims, as well as awareness-raising for professionals and field workers working in high-risk sectors where victims of trafficking in human beings are exploited. In line with the objectives of the Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings for 2023 and 2024, training of registrars at administrative units will also be introduced, as they may identify the occurrence of forced marriages at the time of marriage (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2020a).

Assistance to victims of trafficking is provided within the framework of the projects for the care of victims of trafficking in crisis accommodation, co-financed by the MDDSZ, and safe space, co-financed by the MNZ. The projects are implemented by NGOs and humanitarian organisations selected in a call for tenders held every two years by the ministries. Since 2019, a reintegration programme for victims of trafficking in human beings is also being implemented as a first step towards their independent life free from violence, exploitation and human rights violations. Since the mentioned year, the "PATS – Identifying, assisting and protecting victims of human trafficking and/or sexual abuse in asylum procedures in the Republic of Slovenia" project has also been implemented, aimed at informing applicants for international protection and employees about the presence and dangers of trafficking in human beings. The project has also established a special expert group to prevent and intervene in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, which operates according to agreed operational protocols.

Systematic trainings are being conducted in the Republic of Slovenia in order to achieve a high level of competence and awareness of all actors and implementers of the foreign and security policy of the Republic of Slovenia on the importance of the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in the implementation of international operations and missions (civilian and military missions), the implementation of humanitarian action and development assistance. The police also has a programme for regular training of male and female police officers and criminal investigators in the field of domestic violence investigation, which is regularly implemented. The training programme for the investigation and prevention of domestic violence is based on the domestic violence multiplier training system (train the trainers), with CSD, health, prosecution, court and NGOs regularly participating in the training.

2.4.3 Objectives, measures and indicators

Objectives:

1. Strengthen inter-ministerial integration and cooperation to address more effectively all forms of violence against women and to better inform the professional and general public about the causes and consequences of domestic violence and violence against women.
2. Provide comprehensive and appropriate support for victims of domestic violence and violence against women, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, including the provision of adequate legal protection.
3. Ensure improved professional capacity and awareness of cyber violence, including a gender perspective.
4. Ensure a safe learning and working environment free from violence, sexual and gender-based harassment.
5. Legislative changes to address all forms of violence against women.

OBJECTIVE 1

Strengthen inter-ministerial integration and cooperation to address more effectively all forms of violence against women and to better inform the professional and general public about the causes and consequences of domestic violence and violence against women

MEASURE 1

Continue to provide regular, compulsory and optional, systematic and, where appropriate, inter-ministerial education and training for employees of the police, MO and SV, courts, prosecutors' offices, social welfare, educational institutions and health care who are confronted with the issue and victims of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women, including sexual violence.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MDDSZ, MNZ-P, MP, MVI, MVZI, MZ; CIP, SCSD, CSD, NGO, Social Chamber of Slovenia and educational institutions.

MEASURE 2

Implement activities to promote inter-ministerial cooperation and networking to improve data quality, harmonise objectives and measures and exchange information on all forms of violence against women.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ, MNZ-P and MO.

Indicators:

- number of activities carried out to strengthen inter-ministerial networking and cooperation.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Provide comprehensive and appropriate support for victims of domestic violence and violence against women, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, including the provision of adequate legal protection

MEASURE 1

Disperse and strengthen the network of social protection programmes for victims of domestic violence and violence against women and for working with perpetrators of violence, allowing for equal geographical accessibility to programmes and more specialised support for specific target groups with different personal circumstances (e.g. female members of the LGBTIQ), including timely, diversified and free psychosocial support.

Responsible institution and participants:
MDDSZ; public institutions and NGOs.

MEASURE 2

Improve the practice of comprehensive treatment of victims of domestic violence and violence against women through regular and systematic monitoring of the impact of the implementation of assistance programmes.

Responsible institution and participants:
MDDSZ; MZ, SCSD, CSD, MNZ-P, public institutions and NGOs.

MEASURE 3

Systematic and consistent handling of all reported incidents with elements of violence and implementation of measures to protect victims and perpetrators of violence.

Responsible institution and participants:
MNZ-P; MDDSZ.

MEASURE 4

Provide comprehensive support to victims of violence by regularly, systematically and consistently informing victims of all their rights when reporting crimes, by linking victims with NGOs in the follow-up process and by raising public awareness of victims' rights.

Responsible institution and participants:
MNZ-P; MDDSZ, CSD and NGO.

MEASURE 5

Provide comprehensive support to victims of trafficking in human beings, including systematically informing victims of their rights, providing safe accommodation, medical care, psychosocial support and reintegration.

Responsible institution and participants:
MNZ-P; MDDSZ, MZ, Inter-ministerial Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, NGOs and humanitarian organisations.

MEASURE 6

Strengthen the multidisciplinary approach to address harmful practices in the Roma community, such as the flight of minors to harmful environments, early and forced marriages.

Responsible institution and participants:
URSN; MNZ-P, MDDSZ, MVI, MVZI, CIP, SCSD, Inter-ministerial Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, (MDS TZL) and NGOs.

MEASURE 7

Protect and support victims of sexual and gender-based violence in international protection procedures, with special attention to vulnerable groups of women (minors, single mothers, pregnant women, trafficked women, unaccompanied minors, etc.).

Responsible institution and participants:
MNZ-P; UOIM.

MEASURE 8

Provide support and counselling for women in prison with experience of domestic violence and violence against women by developing and organising psychological support programmes in the field of mental health.

Responsible institution and participants:
MP; URSIKS.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to provide comprehensive and appropriate support to victims of domestic violence and violence against women;

- statistics on domestic violence and violence against women (annual reports of the Slovenian Police);
- the volume and proportion of funds earmarked for co-financing programmes to prevent domestic violence and violence against women.

OBJECTIVE 3

Ensure improved professional capacity and awareness of cyber violence, including a gender perspective

MEASURE 1

Conduct training for male and female professionals on online violence, in particular online sexual abuse.

Responsible institution and participants:

MNZ-P; MP, MDDSZ, MVI, MVZI, CIP and CSD.

MEASURE 2

Raise public awareness, especially among young people, of the dangers and consequences of online violence and work with NGOs on various projects on online violence.

Responsible institution and participants:

MDDSZ; MNZ-P, MVI and MVZI.

Indicator:

- number of activities and trainings carried out to train professionals and raise awareness on cyber violence, including a gender perspective.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Ensure safe working environment free from violence, sexual and gender-based harassment

MEASURE 1

Adopt a strategy for the implementation of measures to prevent and combat gender-based violence at work, sexual harassment and gender-based harassment, and measures to effectively protect workers belonging to one or more vulnerable groups or groups in a vulnerable situation.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ and MJU.

MEASURE 2

Develop tools and training for employees, employers, trade unions and managers to prevent, identify and address incidents of violence, sexual and gender-based harassment in the workplace and strengthen the qualifications of supervisory bodies and occupational safety and health professionals.

Responsible institution:

MDDSZ.

MEASURE 3

Ensure a safe learning and working environment and adopt appropriate legal acts and other grounds for preventing and effectively sanctioning sexual and other harassment in higher education, art academies and cultural institutions.

Responsible institution and participants:

MVZI; MK, NAKVIS, higher education institutions, UL, ALUO, AGRFT and AG.

Indicators:

- number of activities implemented to ensure a safe working environment free from violence, sexual and gender-based harassment;
- adopt a strategy for the implementation of measures to prevent and combat gender-based violence, sexual harassment and gender-based harassment in the workplace.

OBJECTIVE 5

Legislative changes to address all forms of violence against women

MEASURE 1

Explore the possibility of defining femicide as a specific offence or making it more explicit within existing serious offences.

Responsible institution: MP

MEASURE 2

Sensitise labour legislation for victims of domestic violence.

Responsible institution: MDDSZ

Indicators:

- number of victims of domestic violence;
- number of femicides.

2.5 Promoting a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making

2.5.1 Description of the area

Women make up more than half of the population and electorate and are on average more educated than men. However, they are under-represented in decision-making positions at all levels of political decision-making, in management and leadership positions in the public sector, the economy and other organisations. Equal participation of women and men in decision-making is an issue of social justice, respect for human rights, as well as of good governance and taking into account the needs of both halves of the population.

Women's under-representation in decision-making is a wide-ranging and multi-faceted problem that needs to be placed in a broader policy context, which is why EU policies focus on:

- supporting the adoption of binding targets/quotas as temporary specific measures, in particular in the area of political and economic decision-making;
- tackling the general barriers arising from the gender equality situation in society, including by tackling gender segregation in education and employment, promoting family-friendly policies, working towards a more equal sharing of caring responsibilities between women and men, and better reconciliation of work, family and private life in all spheres;
- eliminating non-transparent appointment and promotion systems;
- combating stereotypical perceptions of women's and men's roles.

In previous periods, gender balance has been an issue of intense focus, especially in the area of political participation. Various measures, including so-called gender quotas, have been adopted and have led to significant improvements in many European countries. The EC predicts that countries with legislated quotas will be able to achieve gender balance on average significantly earlier than countries without specific measures, which will take almost two decades to do so, by 2039 (EC, 2023).

The European Commission has made gender balance in decision-making one of the three main pillars of its Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025. Despite encouraging achievements in some Member States, progress across the EU is slow and uneven, and the gap between countries is widening. There are still more men than women in positions of political power in Member States' parliaments and governments, with an average of 32.4% female members of national parliaments and 32.3% female ministers in governments (EC, 2023). Moreover, women are leaders of only 26% of the major political parties (EC, 2022a).

Traditional gender roles and stereotypes, unequal distribution of household and caring responsibilities, and political and work cultures that favour long working hours are cited as the main reasons for women's under-representation. Women are also exposed to harassment and bullying in the workplace, and online violence against women in politics is a growing problem (EC, 2022a).

According to a 2018 study by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 85.2% of the women parliamentarians surveyed had experienced psychological violence during their mandate. Almost half of them reported having received death threats or threats of rape and beatings directed against themselves or their children and other family members. The majority of threats were made through social networks and by email (EC, 2022a).

Recently, the issue of women's greater representation in economic decision-making has become increasingly important in national, European and international arenas.

Women's representation in corporate management is improving, but progress is still very slow and there are significant differences between Member States. In 2022, around 30.2% of women were members of the boards of the largest listed companies in the EU, slightly better than in 2021, when the figure was 30% (EC, 2023).

There are many barriers to highly qualified women being appointed to senior positions on company boards. Barriers to the appointment of women candidates to board positions often stem from the stereotypical roles of men and women that prevail in recruitment and promotion, the male-dominated business culture and the lack of transparency in board appointment procedures.

Government measures to promote a more gender balanced representation on company boards may include "soft" measures aimed at encouraging companies to self-regulate and act independently. Government action can also include 'hard' regulatory approaches, such as the use of legally binding quotas to ensure a minimum representation of each gender - in some cases with sanctions for companies that fail to meet the quotas. According to EIGE, national gender quotas (ranging from 25% to 40%) apply to the boards of listed companies in eleven Member States (EIGE, 2023).

The gender imbalance on the boards of large companies listed on the stock exchange has been identified by the EC as a missed opportunity at company level, both in terms of corporate governance and financial performance. Large companies in the EU continue to be disproportionately led by men, despite the significant economic and business advantages of gender-balanced management teams and the presence of skilled and talented women. As attempts to increase self-regulation as a means to address this issue have failed, the EC already in 2012 supported a proposal for a Directive on ensuring gender balance among non-executive directors of listed companies and on related measures, which foresees a target of at least 40% under-representation of gender among non-executive directors and board members of large listed companies. Achieving this target is also one of the priorities of the new EU strategy on gender equality. The proposal for a Directive was blocked for several

years, but significant progress was made in 2022. In October 2022, the Directive was adopted (OJ L 315, 2022).

The objective of the Directive on ensuring gender balance among directors of listed companies and related measures is to achieve a more balanced representation of women and men in top management positions by setting binding measures aimed at accelerating progress towards gender balance. The adoption of national legislation transposing the Directive will encourage listed companies to ensure that, by 2026, the under-represented gender should occupy at least 40% of non-executive directorships in listed companies and at least 33% of all executive and non-executive directorships. The Directive also requires listed companies that do not meet their targets to adapt their selection process: they will have to put in place fair and transparent selection and appointment procedures based on a comparative assessment of different candidates on the basis of clear and neutral criteria. Where companies have to choose between equally qualified male and female candidates, they should give preference to the under-represented gender. Companies should provide information annually on gender representation on boards and on the measures they are taking to achieve the 33% and 40% targets respectively. Member States will also publish annually a list of companies that have achieved the Directive's targets.

Under the Directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information on certain large companies and groups, large companies are required to disclose non-financial information, including a plan to increase diversity on company boards, which are less well governed, inclusive and innovative, and therefore less conducive to growth, as a result of this insufficient board diversity and lack of transparency (OJ L 330, 2014). The EC also issued non-binding guidance in 2017, setting out in more detail the expectations for companies' disclosure reporting on the description of the diversity policy. This guidance did not sufficiently improve the quality of information that companies should disclose under the Directive and the EC has therefore prepared and published a proposal to update it in April 2021.

The (EU) Directive on corporate sustainability reporting was adopted in 2022 (OJ L 322, 2022). The Directive specifies the information that companies must disclose and extends the reporting obligations to all large companies and, with certain limitations, to small and medium-sized listed companies. Among the information to be disclosed by companies is a description of the diversity policy in relation to the administrative, managerial and supervisory bodies in terms of gender and other aspects (age, education, experience). The description of the diversity policy specifically highlights the gender aspect in relation to the administrative, managerial and supervisory bodies. It also provides that this information must be published in the management report, in order to improve the transparency, accessibility and usability of this information.

Increasing the proportion of the under-represented sex in decision-making in other areas of public life is also important to improve the balance between women and men in decision-making positions. At EU level, the EU Platform for Diversity Charters provides a space for the exchange of good practice.

2.5.2 Situation in the Republic of Slovenia

In the 2022 elections, 40% of women were elected to the National Assembly, a significantly higher proportion than in the 2018 early elections, when 24.5% of women were elected. In May 2022, the Republic of Slovenia elected a female Speaker of the National Assembly for the first time in its history, and in November 2022, a woman was elected President of the Republic for the first time in the country's history.

The share of female mayors and municipal councillors and members of National Council remains low. In the 2022 local elections, 34.98% of local community and municipal female councillors were elected, a slight increase compared to the previous local elections in 2018, when 33.3% of local community and municipal female councillors were elected. In total, 29 women, or 13.68 per cent, were elected as mayors. Among local community and municipal male and female councillors and councillors from ethnic and Roma communities, 20.5% are female representatives of ethnic communities and 11.1% are female representatives of Roma communities (DVK, 2022). Four women (10 per cent) were elected to the National Council in 2017 and seven (17.5 per cent) in 2022 (DS, 2022).

The composition of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (June 2022) is more gender-balanced, with seven women (41.2%) of the 17 ministers appointed (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2022).

Commitments to achieve equality between women and men in society or to ensure a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making and decision-making were further upgraded in 2019 by amendments to the ZEMŽM. They relate to increasing the proportion of under-represented gender in the composition of the working bodies of the government and of the management and supervisory bodies of public law entities, and in the appointment or nomination of representatives of self-governing local communities and self-governing national communities to the management and supervisory bodies of public law entities (ZEMŽM, 2002).

In the largest listed companies, there are no women among the chairmen and chairwomen, 23.8% of women among the members of the boards of directors and 23.8% of women among the employee representatives, 10.5% of women among the managing directors and directors, and 18.5% of women among the executive directors and 24.4% of women among the non-executive directors and directors (EIGE, 2022b). In accordance with the amendment to the Companies Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], No 65/09 - official consolidated text, 33/11, 91/11, 32/12, 57/12, 44/13 - Constitutional Court Decision, 82/13, 55/15, 15/17, 22/19 - ZPosS, 158/20 - ZIntPK-C and 18/21), companies that are obliged to prepare a management report must also include in the report the diversity policy implemented with regard to representation on the company's management and supervisory bodies, in terms of gender and other aspects such as age or education. Accordingly, companies must report on the objectives, implementation methods and results achieved.

There are also few women in decision-making positions in science. Only one of the six university rectors is a woman, while the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU) has 15.4% women among its members (SAZU, 2022). There is also a low proportion of women in decision-making positions in publicly owned broadcasting organisations: TV, radio and news agencies operating at national level.

In line with the recommendations of international organisations, the importance of women taking up decision-making and command positions in the MO/SV and taking up decision-making and command positions in the police is also recognised in the Republic of Slovenia. In line with the principle of equal opportunities, female SV members hold senior and command positions at home and abroad. In November 2018, Slovenia was the first country in the North Atlantic Alliance and, to our knowledge, in the world to appoint a female General as Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces. In 2021, the SV had a 9% representation of women in decision-making positions. In the police, the representation of women in decision-making positions in relation to the total number of decision-making positions is 9%. In December 2018, the first female Director General of the Police was appointed. The Police has not yet had a woman deployed as a police attaché abroad (MNZ - P, 2023).

2.5.3 Objectives, measures and indicators

Objectives:

1. Balanced representation of women and men at all levels of political decision-making.
2. Balanced representation of women in managerial and executive positions in the economy.
3. Balanced representation of women and men in decision-making positions in other areas of public life.

OBJECTIVE 1

Balanced representation of women and men at all levels of political decision-making

MEASURE 1

Promote progress towards a balanced representation of women and men in political decision-making positions and raise awareness of its importance at national and local levels, including through changes to electoral legislation and support for programmes and projects to encourage young women to become involved in politics.

Responsible institution:
MJU and MDDSZ.

Indicators:

- activities implemented to increase share of women in decision-making positions in politics;
- share of women in the National Assembly;
- share of women in the National Council;
- share of women in the Government of Slovenia;
- share of local community and municipal female councillors;
- the share of female mayors;
- share of women and men in the composition of the working bodies of the Government, management and supervisory bodies of public law entities and in the appointment or nomination of representatives of self-governing local communities and self-governing national communities to management and supervisory bodies of public law entities.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Balanced representation of women and men in managerial and executive positions in the economy

MEASURE 1

Promote progress in the area of representation of the under-represented sex in the management and supervisory bodies of companies, in particular by actively encouraging the bodies responsible for the adoption of corporate governance codes for listed companies or companies with state-owned assets (public limited companies, SDH, DUTB) to include in these codes a requirement for a more balanced representation of both women and men in company management positions (e.g. at least 40% representation of both women and men).

Responsible institution and participants:
MGTS; MDDSZ.

MEASURE 2

Promote gender balance in the management and supervisory bodies of companies, with the aim of increasing the proportion of under-represented gender to 40% in non-executive directorships, or at least 33% in total of all directorships (executive and non-executive).

Responsible institution and participants:

MGTS; MDDSZ.

MEASURE 3

Encourage the design of corporate diversity policies that include a gender perspective to disclose in the description of the diversity policy the gender ratio in the management and supervisory bodies appropriate for a company of its size, the objectives set and the impact on the selection procedures for members of the management and supervisory bodies, in line with the legal obligation for large and medium-sized companies auditing their annual reports.

Responsible institution:

MGTS.

Indicators:

- activities implemented to increase the proportion of under-represented gender in decision-making positions in the economy;
- share of women and men in executive and non-executive directorships in major listed companies.

OBJECTIVE 3

Balanced representation of women and men in decision-making positions in other areas of public life

MEASURE 1

Promote gender balance in top academic and research positions by carrying out analyses of the situation at national level, by developing measures to address inequalities (gender equality strategy in the academy) and by continuously reviewing the impact of the measures taken on gender equality.

Responsible institution and participants:

MVZI; Commission for Equal Opportunities in Science, NAKVIS, Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Slovenia.

MEASURE 2

Promote a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making in important national organisations and institutions, ministries and ministerial bodies by regularly monitoring the situation, carrying out gender analyses, integrating measures to ensure equal treatment in the workplace, promoting equal career opportunities and a more balanced representation in decision-making positions, especially in traditionally gender-stereotyped structures (military, police) and in professions with a strong female predominance.

Responsible institution:

MJU; MO-SV, MNZ-P, MZEZ.

MEASURE 3

Encourage prize and award promoters to take into account the principle of balanced representation when preparing their proposals, and prize and award-giving bodies to create gender-balanced panels to judge male and female recipients.

Responsible institution:

All ministries.

MEASURE 4

Training to promote gender balance in the selection of female and male experts who shape public opinion in the media space.

Responsible institution:

MK.

Indicators:

- activities implemented to achieve a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making positions in various areas of public life;
- share of female members of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts;
- share of women in management positions in national sports organisations;
- share of women in management positions in media;
- share of women in decision-making and command positions in the MO and the armed forces;
- share of women in decision-making and management positions in the MNZ and MNZ-P;
- share of women decision-making positions in diplomacy;
- number of training courses for male and female journalists on promoting gender balance among male and female professionals who shape public opinion in the media sphere.

2.6 Promoting gender equality and women's rights worldwide

2.6.1 Description of the area

Promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls is an important objective of global foreign policy. It is key to achieving development and ensuring social justice: the position of women, children and minorities or disadvantaged groups in a society is one of the fundamental indicators of its development and democracy. Despite international efforts and the many commitments made, gender inequality is still deeply embedded in the cultural, social and political systems of many countries and, unfortunately, is still part of the everyday experience of many women around the world.

The efforts of the EU and international organisations to improve the situation of women and girls worldwide focus in particular on:

- elimination of gender discrimination and violations of their rights;
- access to financial resources;
- access to employment and participation in economic activities;
- access to education;
- access to basic health care services;
- access to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- elimination of gender-based violence in its worst forms (female genital mutilation, trafficking, sexual violence);
- decision-making;
- women's participation in peace-building and security.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are among the fundamental objectives of EU external action, which promotes gender equality and women's empowerment in international partnerships, political and human rights dialogues with third countries, trade, neighbourhood and enlargement policies, as well as in the context of interventions in situations of fragility, conflict and emergency (Council of the EU, 2018).

The year 2020 marks 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UN, 1995) and 20 years since the adoption of the UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UN, 2000a). Nevertheless no country in the world will have achieved gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by 2030. Many inequalities persist, including inequalities in basic access to health, education and jobs, as well as inequalities resulting from gender-based and sexual violence. In many settings, women's and girls' rights are questioned and often not recognised. In 2020 and 2021, one of the key factors increasing inequalities and threatening hard-won progress was the pandemic.

GAP III therefore stresses that the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis must also be an opportunity to tackle structural inequalities and build more inclusive societies.

International development cooperation, or official development assistance, is an important instrument for developed countries in the international community. In line with the Millennium Development Goals and other international commitments, donor countries contribute a share of GDP towards equitable and balanced global development. The EU is therefore, together with its Member States, the largest global donor of development aid. Through international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, it contributes to a more balanced and equitable global development, to the eradication of poverty and inequality and to the achievement of sustainable development. It also promotes the response to humanitarian crises, building resilience to crises and crisis prevention. In the context of projects with gender equality as a central objective, international development and humanitarian activities in partner countries are expected to focus primarily on women's economic and social rights, including the right to education; and women's inclusion in decision-making processes as part of overall good governance; and ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights; and preventing gender-based violence.

One of the key areas of action at global level and in the Republic of Slovenia is women's action in the field of peace and security. International and regional organisations such as the UN, NATO, the EU, the African Union, the OSCE, adopt resolutions, regulations and measures, drawing attention to the importance of women's equal and full inclusion and participation in peace and security efforts, and pointing to measures for the empowerment of women and girls in various fields, (involvement of local women, inclusion of Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the planning of international operations and missions, provision and allocation of development and humanitarian aid, inclusion of women in national defence and security structures, etc.). They also draw attention to women's and girls' exposure to sexual and gender-based violence in crisis, war and post-war situations, as well as in contemporary security threats; in this context, efforts to combat the various uses of sexual violence as a weapon of war or as a tactic of warfare, such as terrorism, violent extremism, trafficking in human beings, are of a particular focus, which calls for clear guidelines to ensure the protection of women and girls and for action to prevent sexual violence, punish perpetrators and assist survivors. The EU and the Member States are actively promoting the participation of more women in military and civilian peacekeeping operations, especially in leadership positions, calling for more women to be appointed to high-level positions both in national security and defence structures and in missions abroad, for a review of the military's promotion policy, for more in-depth training for men and women involved in civilian action on gender aspects, on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations, etc. In order to implement Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, countries, including the Republic of Slovenia, are preparing National Action Plans that bring together various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders relevant to the implementation of Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and to mainstreaming a gender perspective in peace and security-related areas.

2.6.2 Situation in the Republic of Slovenia

Slovenia is a member of various EU and international working bodies, as well as of a number of international groups and initiatives established to promote gender equality and the adoption of policies in this area. These include the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming (EU), the Gender Equality Advisory Board (EU), the Governing Board and Expert Forum (EIGE), the Commission for Gender Equality (Council of Europe), the OECD Network on Gender Equality, the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBV), the Working Party on Gender Mainstreaming and Governance (WP GMG), the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, the International Gender

Champions Network (New York, Geneva, Vienna and the Hague), the EU Informal Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, the NATO Informal Task Force on Women, Peace and Security, the Friends of Women, Peace and Security (GoFWPS) and the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls (GoFVAW), both based in New York, and the NATO-NCPG Committee on Gender Perspectives. The Republic of Slovenia prepares regular reports on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures it has taken to comply with CEDAW and on the progress made by the Republic of Slovenia, participates in bilateral and multilateral initiatives and events promoting gender equality, and is active in the bodies of various international institutions for the promotion of gender equality (MZEZ, 2023a).

Slovenia is recognised in the international community as an advocate of gender equality and women's human rights. The Republic of Slovenia advocates gender equality and women's empowerment through its active participation (as a member or observer) in a number of other working bodies of the EU and international organisations that are not exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the adoption of policies in this field, such as the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council, the UNSC, a number of functional commissions of the UN Economic and Social Council, the North Atlantic Council and other NATO bodies, the OSCE Permanent Council and other OSCE working bodies, and the Committee of Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe and the other working bodies of the Council of Europe.

The Republic of Slovenia also advocates gender equality in various international development fora (UN, EU, OECD). In the design of the EU new financial instruments (Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)), the Republic of Slovenia has advocated for the inclusion of this element in the major policy orientations of EU development aid funding and programming. The targets in the EU new financial instruments (Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)) are set high, as at least 85% of all NDICI activities will have to have gender equality identified as a main or important objective. The first Framework Programme for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid in 2010 foresaw a thematic focus on two areas to strengthen the effectiveness of development cooperation, while at the same time identifying women's empowerment as a cross-cutting theme for Slovenian international development cooperation. In 2018, the Strategy reaffirmed gender equality as a cross-cutting theme of international development cooperation, which means that all international development cooperation projects should also contain elements that contribute to women's economic and social rights, reconciliation of family and professional life, women's inclusion in decision-making processes, prevention of violence against women and girls, and ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights. The impact of a programme or project on gender equality is one of the mandatory criteria under the Decree on the implementation of the international development cooperation and humanitarian aid of the Republic of Slovenia (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2018d).

In 2020, in total 39 activities with a total value of EUR 2,787,827 were focused on achieving gender equality (of which 31 activities with a value of EUR 2,077,468 were within the framework of programme development assistance). Of these, 12 activities - eight NGO projects, one the ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF) project, a dedicated contribution from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to work on sexual exploitation and abuse in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a contribution to the EIB's Economic Resilience Trust Fund and one the Ministry of Defence activity - had a total value of EUR 689,014 for the gender equality headline target, and 27 activities by different funders and implementers with a total value of EUR 2,038,813 for the gender equality major target (MZEZ, 2023a)).

Compared to 2019, the number of gender equality activities has decreased by 14 and the total by 13%. On the other hand, the value of activities that have gender equality as

a main objective has increased by 16%. The proportion of bilateral programme assistance that includes a gender perspective was 39% in 2020, a significant increase from the 2017 baseline of 20%, as well as a significant increase from the previous year. This almost reaches the interim target of 40% set for 2022 in the Strategy for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid of the Republic of Slovenia until 2030. According to the Strategy, this share is expected to increase to 60% by 2030.

By implementing the action plans for the implementation of UNSC resolutions on women, peace and security and by mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of project activities, Slovenia is fulfilling its commitments in international and regional organisations. The SV is active and visible in the international environment and at home through the successful implementation of Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, by involving SV members and appointing gender experts and gender advisors at all levels of command in the SV.

In terms of the percentage and positions of female MO and SV members in deployments to the IOM, Slovenia is at the top of the North Atlantic Alliance countries. The average representation of female SV members in deployed deployments in the IOM has fluctuated between 7 and 11% over the last decade - in 2022, the SV had an average of 274 SV members deployed in the IOM on a daily basis, of which 26 were women (9.5%). The SV also conducts training for all SV members deployed in the IOM on the implementation of Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and gender mainstreaming, with a focus on familiarising SV members with the situation of women in the area of operations. The proportion is increasing, however, there is a need for regular education and training of SV members on awareness, understanding and handling of sexual violence in conflict and crisis situations, as well as training of police on topics related to Agenda 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. From 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2019, the Slovenian Police deployed 36 male police officers and 6 female police officers (14.28%) on international civilian missions. In 2020, the Police deployed four male police officers and no female police officers on international civilian missions, and in 2021, three male police officers and no female police officers.

2.6.3 Objectives, measures and indicators

Objectives:

1. Support gender equality efforts and ensure the realisation of women's and girls' rights at international, European and national levels.
2. Improve the social and economic situation of women and girls in partner and developing countries.
3. Enhance the role and involvement of women in international peace and security.

OBJECTIVE 1

Support gender equality efforts and ensure the realisation of women's and girls' rights at international, European and national levels

MEASURE 1

Further promote gender equality standards and the empowerment and role of women and girls in policies and policy-making in the international community, in particular international and regional organisations.

Responsible institution:
MZEZ and MDDSZ.

MEASURE 2

Support for gender equality and women's empowerment at international level, including through enhanced political dialogue, diplomatic efforts, and the organisation of events and participation in relevant initiatives.

Institutions responsible:

MZEZ and MDDSZ.

MEASURE 3

Support initiatives in international fora at regional and global level that promote equal opportunities and gender equality and the balanced representation of women and men in public and political life (e.g. HeForShe, MenEngage, She Decides, EU-UN Spotlight Initiative).

Responsible institution:

MZEZ and MDDSZ.

MEASURE 4

Financial support to international organisations whose activities are in line with Slovenia's priority thematic areas for international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, which include gender equality.

Responsible institution:

MZEZ.

Indicators:

- number of activities (initiatives, events, financial incentives) aimed at promoting gender equality and women's rights worldwide;
- political dialogue on gender equality in the framework of bilateral relations with partner countries.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Improve the social and economic situation of women and girls in partner and developing countries

MEASURE 1

Support the implementation of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid activities and projects that strengthen gender equality in partner countries.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZEZ and project implementers of international development cooperation

MEASURE 2

Mainstreaming gender equality in international development cooperation and humanitarian aid through the promotion of gender equality at international level and through contributions to international organisations.

Responsible institution and participants:

MZEZ and project implementers of international development cooperation

Indicators:

- number of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid activities and projects aimed at strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in partner countries;
- proportion of bilateral programme assistance that includes a gender perspective;
- number of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects and programmes with a gender-based ex-ante assessment, including a needs analysis of the partner country (for projects above EUR 10,000).

OBJECTIVE 3

Enhance the role and involvement of women in international peace and security

MEASURE 1

Increase the involvement of women in international peacekeeping and peacebuilding (IOM) operations and missions and in decision-making and action processes.

Responsible institution:

MO, MNZ-P, MZEZ.

MEASURE 2

Raise public awareness of the importance of women's participation in peace and security in Slovenia, maintain gender balance, raise awareness and training of persons involved in decision-making processes and international operations and missions.

Responsible institution:

MO, MNZ-P, MZEZ.

MEASURE 3

Raise awareness and take action to protect women and girls from sexual violence in crisis situations and contemporary security threats.

Responsible institutions and participants:

MDDSZ, MZEZ, MO, MNZ-P, MZ.

Indicators:

- consistent political commitment at the international level to the total elimination of sexual violence in crisis situations and contemporary security threats;
- number of activities aimed at empowering women to play a greater role in international peace and security;
- contribution to international organisations for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in emergencies (in line with the commitments made by the Republic of Slovenia when joining the International Call to Action to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies);
- proportion of female SV members in international peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations and missions and in decision-making and action processes (female SV members and civilian functional specialists (CFS));
- proportion of female police officers in international peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations and missions, decision-making and action procedures.

2.7 List of commonly used acronyms and abbreviations

ARRS	Slovenian Research Agency
CIP	Judicial Training Centre
CPI	Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training
CSD	social work centre
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EC	European Commission
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
FDV	Faculty of Social Sciences
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
ICT	information and communication technologies
MDDSZ	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MDP	Ministry of Digital Transformation
IOM	International Operations and Missions
MGTS	Ministry of the Economy, Tourism and Sport

MJU	Ministry of Public Administration
MK	Ministry of Culture
MKGP	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
MNZ	Ministry of the Interior
MNZ – P	Ministry of the Interior - the Police
MO	Ministry of Defence
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MP	Ministry of Justice
MVI	Ministry of Education
MVZI	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation
MSP	Ministry of a Solidarity-Based Future
MZ	Ministry of Health
MZEZ	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
NAKVIS	Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
NIJZ	National Institute of Public Health
NPUR	National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia
NGO	non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SCSD	Association of Social Work Centres of Slovenia
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
SURS	Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia
SV	Slovenian Armed Forces
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
SZD	Slovenian Medical Association
URSN	Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for National Minorities
IMAD	Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia
UOIM	Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Support and Integration of Migrants
URSIKS	Prison Administration of the Republic of Slovenia
UN	United Nations
ZZZS	Health Insurance Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

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