

SUMMARY:

Action Plan for achieving gender equality in Montenegro 2013-2017 (hereinafter: APAGE) was adopted in January 2013. So far, the Government of Montenegro has adopted three reports (for 2013, 2014 and 2015) on implementation of this Plan. The period of validity of this document was completed on 31 December 2016.

Within 2014 IPA project „Support to implementation of the Anti-discrimination and gender equality policies in Montenegro”, implemented by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights in cooperation with UNDP office in Montenegro from April 2016 and financed by the EU Delegation, an international expert was contracted to conduct an external evaluation of implementation of the previous APAGE, available at: <http://www.minmanj.gov.me/ministarstvo>.

The evaluation showed an evident improvement of the legislative and institutional framework for achieving gender equality and tangible results in all areas of life both at national and local level, but there is still room for further action in order to create equal conditions for all citizens of Montenegro.

The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the Gender Equality Committee of the Parliament and the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, with contact persons from all relevant institutions required to perform tasks related to the achievement of gender equality at national and local level, have significantly improved the implementation of the policy of gender equality with their activities. In addition to the above-mentioned, the activities of relevant institutions identified as holders of activities both at national and local level contributed to a significant improvement of the situation of women in all aspects and areas of the society.

Support has been given by the international organizations in the process of implementation of the activities, namely the UNDP and OSCE Mission in Montenegro, which provided financial and technical assistance as partner organizations. The EU Delegation in Montenegro also provided the support in the implementation of activities. The NGO sector has played a significant role in implementation process, both through its own projects as well as through participation in joint projects and campaigns.

The National Council for Gender Equality was established on 24 October 2016 and represents a new institutional mechanism for achieving gender equality. As a professional advisory body, it was formed to discuss issues of implementation of gender equality policies at the national and local level. Council work refers to the consideration and application of the rules related to gender equality and the evaluation of these regulations and their effect on the position of women and men. The Chairman of the Council is the

Minister for Human and Minority Rights. In addition to the representatives of relevant institutions, the Council is also composed of 4 representatives of the NGOs. In order to discuss issues in specific areas of importance for gender equality eight advisory bodies are formed within the Council, which further monitor the implementation and improvement of policy of equal opportunities within their area, and every advisory body, or committee, has an appointed president. The committees are as follows:

- Committee for greater presence of women in political participation,
- Committee on economic empowerment and status of women in the labor market,
- Committee for protection from domestic violence and violence against women,
- Committee on healthcare and social protection of women,
- Committee on science, education, culture and sport,
- Committee for sustainable and rural development,
- Committee for international cooperation, and
- Committee for cooperation with local governments.

Report on the implementation of the 2016 Program for implementation Action Plan for Achieving Gender Equality is presented in a table with the information obtained from the relevant institutions, which are either holders of activities or partners on implementation of measures from APAGE.

The aforementioned report for 2016 indicates the degree of improvement of legislative and institutional mechanisms, both at national and local level, as well as significant progress in three priority areas: political participation, economic empowerment and combating violence against women.

A large number of activities in this Report, is incorporated in the reports on implementation of action plans for negotiating chapters – Chapter 23: Judiciary and Fundamental Rights and 19: Social policy and employment, which showed that the measures provided for in this action plans are being implemented as planned.

The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights is continuously organizing trainings and promotions of anti-discriminatory behaviors and practices, which is also noted in the 2016 Report.

In September 2016, the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and the Statistical Office of Montenegro signed a Memorandum of cooperation on the project "Gender Equality Index" in Montenegro and other joint activities in the field of anti-discrimination, gender equality and minority rights".

The mentioned institutions announced in October 2016 the jubilee publication "Women and Men in Montenegro in 2016", the sixth edition, which was initiated in 2006 and whose aim is to show in one place the largest number of features disaggregated by gender:

<http://www.mmp.gov.me/rubrike/Publikacije/166949/zene-i-muskarci-u-Crnoj-Gori-2016.html>

Previous year is jubilee because we marked 70 years of women gaining the right to vote. On this occasion, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights in cooperation with the UNDP Office in Montenegro organized in May 2016 a solemn academy, whose aim was to promote the participation of women in political and public life.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, in cooperation with the UNDP Office in Montenegro and partner organizations, organized a conference on enhancing gender equality in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey in December 2016 in Budva, which brought together more than 100 participants of the mechanisms for gender equality. The aim of this conference was to create a regional platform for gender equality and to strengthen regional mechanisms of cooperation.

After submitting II Periodic report on the implementation of CEDAW convention, additional questions and comments were submitted to Montenegro, on which the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights submitted the answers in a timely manner, in coordination with other competent institutions. Montenegro will present the above-mentioned report to the CEDAW Committee in July 2017.

After the parliamentary elections in October 2016, in the current session of the Parliament of Montenegro (26th convocation) out of 81 deputies 19 are women or 23.46%, which represents an increase if compared to the 25th convocation when there were 15 women, or 18.5%. This is the best result in the history of Montenegrin parliamentarism.

The executive branch in the newly formed government of Montenegro after the parliamentary elections in October 2016 had four female ministers out of 19 or 21,05%. (Minister of Science, Minister of Economy, Minister of Public Administration and the Minister without Portfolio).

The Government of Montenegro adopted the 2016 Report on the Implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, which presented the results of the implementation of this Law for the period 2010-2015, which contains recommendations for improvements in the field of domestic violence. This law is assessed as very good and in line with international standards. The problems in its implementation that have been encountered by data analysis do not stem from legislation, but from the problems of interpretation of the law, the lack of financial, operational and human resources, low level of sensibility of persons who apply the law.

UNDP's Program to support women in business, whose implementation was initiated in 2016 in cooperation of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro and UNDP, continuously provided education or training on entrepreneurship to all interested women from the municipality of Niksic and the capital Podgorica. Investment and Development Fund (IRF) of Montenegro, taking into account the importance of female entrepreneurship, continued to carry a credit line designed for women.

Cooperation with the NGO sector is maintained continuously. Regular meetings are held with non-governmental organizations dealing with human rights, gender equality, combating violence against women and domestic violence, as well as the economic position of women.

Activities are conducted through joint campaigns, trainings, researches, and implementation of projects financed by international organizations.

Montenegro became the 29th member of the initiative "Partnership for Equal Future" in May 2016, which is dedicated to the economic and political empowerment of women at the national and global levels. This initiative is the promotion of national projects and policies, especially the promotion of the national policy of gender equality. A special website of the initiative "Partnership for Equal Future" was also created:

<http://www.equal-futures.org/country/montenegro> .