Executive Summary

The German NAP 2000 is characterized by a positive attitude towards women's employment and mentions women in nearly all paragraphs and guidelines as a statistical category (women's proportion, women's special position etc.) It is therefore a step forward compared to the 1998 NAP but as in NAP 1999 a lot of the programs and initiatives are not yet implemented or do not have been evaluated so far. The most successful implementation of mainstreaming seems to take place within the Federal Employment Service as its legally fixed obligation to fulfil certain targets and evaluate the instruments is rather strong and shows first results. The establishment of female officer responsible for the gender mainstreaming in the daily work of local employment offices and the obligation to report have a positive impact on gender awareness.

The government itself has not yet put into practice the mainstreaming concept, with the exception of the program on Information technologies and jobs and the University program. Both are good examples of successful integration of gender-issues.

Some central points and programs/ measures in gender policy are missing in the NAP: women in leading position (vertical segregation), promotion of skilled part-time and the right to opt for part-time (not only for parents), federal programs to promote child care facilities in Western Germany. And what is missing in general is a more regional sensitive analysis of women's position in East Germany which is still worse than for East German men and would include a necessity of action programs in employment creation etc. What is missing is a strong commitment of the social partners on mainstreaming and the integration of “women's issues” in the Alliance for Job talks – neither in pay nor in employment questions are new initiatives planned. This is rather negative as social partners still play a crucial role in employment policy and in enterprise policy.

The Government gave up its own plan to change the income tax splitting system and to develop a law on the promotion of women in the private sector.
### Summary table. Evaluation of National Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>List of Measures in 2000 NAP</th>
<th>(i)</th>
<th>(ii)</th>
<th>(iii)</th>
<th>(iv)</th>
<th>(v)</th>
<th>(vi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment promotion (job creation etc)</td>
<td><strong>GL 1</strong>, Immediate Action Programme: targets:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- women's proportion of participants as high as proportion among the young unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- integration of women in male dominated or other technical occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>targets in 1999 not reached, evaluation part of programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>GL 2</strong> Long term unemployment: changed eligibility criteria – more precise definition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in favour of women and returners, targets in 1999 not reached, evaluation part of programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GL 3</strong> Active labour market policy: targets:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- women's proportion of participants as high as proportion among unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- employment service is obliged to assess measures and programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- yearly reports of all levels on the impact of measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>targets in 1999 not reached, especially not in East Germany</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GL 5</strong>: promotion of women in IT vocational training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GL 12</strong>: Contest “regions of the future for women”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>target: stimulate models of job creation on the regional and Länder level, measures may</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vary (from promotion of self-employment to vocational training initiatives)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GL 13</strong>: Action programme IT-jobs (including</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the best</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>GL Notes</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax and benefit system (incentives for participation etc)</td>
<td>no gender-related initiative in tax-system, positive effects of the inclusion of part-time working employees in the part-time early retirement scheme for women are not expected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures for the employed</td>
<td>GL 6: Action programme IT-jobs (including the best practice example “women in the Information society – see details there)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures for the unemployed</td>
<td>see GL 1 youth unemployment, see GL 2 and 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures for the inactive and returners</td>
<td>GL 21: mentions - Employment Service activities (see GL 2 and 3), - the proposed changes in parental leave law, - increase in child-care</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>GL 10 and 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>GL 15 and 16 at present state only “paper” no real programmes/measure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender mainstreaming</td>
<td>GL 18: - inter-ministry work group (planned), - catalogue of criteria and measures (planned), - revision of joint standing orders of Government (planned), - check for compatibility (planned), - few Ministries have implemented a equality controlling in the budget revisions</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desegregation</td>
<td><strong>GL 1 and GL 5</strong>: IT-jobs and technical jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>GL 19: announcement of a study on the gender pay gap</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental leave</td>
<td>GL 20: revision of the law on parental leave (planned) which would help to combine work and children more equally than today</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care (children, elderly, other)</td>
<td>GL 13: announcement of an analysis of the reorganisation of care professions (?) GL 20: some campaigns and events are planned GL 21: adequate provision of child-care is announced</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other family friendly measures</td>
<td>GL 14 Tax policy: children allowances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) gender impact taken into account in the design  
(ii) aimed at improving the process of gender mainstreaming  
(iii) monitored for gender impact  
(iv) aimed at closing gender gaps  
(v) aimed at improving the reconciliation of work and family life  
(vi) aimed at allowing women and men to return to the labour market
1. The gender equality deficit and the need for action

Germany’s gender equality deficits are strongly connected with two aspects: the overall economic developments, especially in East Germany, and the socio-economic models of women’s role in the economy and society forming the relevant institutions (both legal, financial and in “real” terms – i.e. child care). Whereas the first aspect is still not satisfying (the economic development in terms of employment creation is still weak), the second part is subject to more changes as the political power changed in 1998 towards a socialdemocrat/green government which at least proposed a more comprehensive and modern approach to women’s roles. How far this approach results in real changes in the institutional framework, has to be examined in detail. This first report gives an overview and identifies the major challenges and deficits.

1. 1 The current gender equality deficits

- a substantial gap in labour force participation: a growing labour force participation of women in West Germany which lies still only around the EU-average and a falling, but still higher labour force participation rate of East German women is accompanied by an unstable labour force participation of women with small children. The duration of time-off of employment is statistically declining (as women in parental leave are counted as employed) but still rather long and influenced by the lack of child-care facilities for children under the age of 3 (in West Germany) and the substantial lack of employment opportunities for women in East Germany.

- a substantial proportion of unemployed women (both registered and non-registered): persistently high rates of unemployment are observable in East Germany with women having rates nearly double as high in East Germany than in West Germany and a growing proportion of long-term unemployment. In West Germany women’s registered unemployment is a little bit smaller than men´s (since 1995), but with a unemployment rate of more than 10% still very high

- a substantial gap in employment growth both in the private and the public sector of the economy: the overall employment growth is rather weak and as far as
women’s employment is growing this is due to the growing of part-time and marginal employment resulting in more skilled women in low-skilled and low paid jobs. The private sector employment is undergoing a slow structural change with still strong emphasis on Germanys specialisation in manufacturing industries and a dynamic growth in production related services whereas personal services (either private or public) are still underdeveloped and are one major cause of Germanys lack in services\(^1\). Especially in East Germany the employment development is poor and growing employment does not benefit women.

**- a persistently high gender wage gap:** despite the growing skill level of women in employment the overall wage gap is not reduced but persistently high. The reflects a mixture of factors influencing the wage position: the unequal distribution of women in the hierarchy of jobs, the concentration of women in low paid sectors and occupations, the difficulties to develop and accept a gender-neutral job classification system by the social partners. The development of less regulated labour and wage contracts in the dynamic growing areas is widening the already existing wage gap.

**- a low percentage of women in high paid or decision making positions:** Germanys performance in this respect is weak as we do have a substantially low proportion of women in leading positions in management of private or public enterprises, in universities and even in public services like health care etc. Women’s proportion among the new entrepreneurs is growing but still small.

**- a high concentration of women in a small range of occupations and apprenticeships:** the segregation of the labour market is still as high as ever, with women concentrating in a small range of clerical, trade, social and personal jobs whereas men are less concentrated and more evenly distributed among manual and non-manual jobs both in growing and in declining industries. As a result men are more likely to be employed both in the declining manufacturing and building industries such as steel industry or ship-building, and in the growing industries like

---

\(^1\) A gender-sensitive analysis of the development of services would have brought up this point in the Council Recommendations for the NAPs 1999 (p. 9 ff.), especially in Germany as the poor performance in all services related to private households is a result of gender-policy in Germany: a more positive approach towards household relates services instead of the ideology of making everything at home would increase women’s employment opportunities both as employees and as customers of these services.
production related information and technologies, transport and communication sectors and business related services like counselling, marketing etc. During the last years it was easier for men to enter women’s jobs in higher paid clerical and trade occupations then for women to enter better paid male jobs. Whereas women’s concentration in the service sector prevented growing unemployment during the 80s, this concentration may serve as a trap in the years to come due to technological and other changes in the traditional female occupations. The implementation of new apprenticeships in IT-related occupations did result in a very low proportion of women having the opportunity to take up these places.

- a persistently conservative dominated family policy: despite all rhetorics of modernisation and free choice the dominant model of family and gender role is still rather conservative which is reflected in a resp. high value attributed to women’s work at home. Germany spends still a lot of money for (private) family work, both as direct subsidies, as tax reductions, in the overall tax- splitting systems and in the lack of creation of real infrastructure to combine work and family. In the mixture of parental leave regulations, the tax-system, the family ideology and labour market conditions we discover a model of women’s incomplete labour market integration as the socially accepted norm (including women).

1.2 Employment trends

During the last years (1994 – 1998 resp. 1999) overall employment in Germany declined from 30, 129 million in 1994 to 29,921 million in 1999 (all data/information by IAB 2000\(^2\)), the lowest number of employees was reached in 1997 with 29, 663 million. Since then we do have a slow growing in numbers. The growth of employment is only true for West Germany, in East Germany employment declined even in 1998 and 1999. The volume of hours worked was declining in the years 1994

\(^2\) IAB (Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung) 2000: Der Arbeitsmarkt im Jahr 2000. IAB-Kurzbericht Ausgabe 1/ 29.2.2000, Nürnberg. The data provided for 1999 do not include gender-related information. The IAB-data vary considerably from data given by national accounts, see Employment in Europe 1999, which gives the number of 33,970 million employed in 1998. The difference may be due to the different sources and concepts of employment: the national account includes all employment with more than 1 hour paid/weekly, the IAB uses the microcensus data combined with the employment data which underestimate marginal part-time jobs.
to 1997 and is growing in the West in 1998 and 1999 by 0.8%, in the East by 0.4%. The economic performance of Germany as a whole is weak with an annual growth in GDP with less than 2 per cent in most years. Even in 2000 the expected growth rates will not be sufficient to reduce unemployment in a remarkable way or to create new employment in a sufficient number. The number of registered unemployed reached more than 4,3 million in 1997 and remained with 4,1 million in 1999 exceptionally high. The unemployment rate 1999 was 8.8% in West Germany and 17.6% in East Germany, in West Germany it was 10.6% for men and 10.3% for women, in East Germany it was 17.4% for men and 21.8% for women.

In West Germany the number of employed women rose during the period 1994 to 1998 by 2.4%\(^3\), whereas the number of employed men fell by 2.1%. In East Germany overall employment fell more dramatically and between 1991 and 1998 the number of employed women fell by 18.6% (- 670.000 employees) and of employed men by 13.2% (- 547.000 employees). During the period 1994 – 1998 the reduction was less pronounced and had same proportions for men and women. Most of the employment expansion in West Germany is due to the expansion of part-time work, and the number of full-time employed women was decreasing.

Sectoral and structural changes influenced women’s position in the labour market (period 1995 – 1998): in West Germany women’s proportion in growing industries like production related services declined, and it declined in some declining industries like agriculture and remained stable in manufacturing. A decline in women’s and overall employment is observed in banking and finance and in public administration and an increase is observed in public/private services, where 33% of all employed women have their jobs. In East Germany women’s proportion in employment declined in nearly all sectors, the only growth areas had been building industries (decline in overall employment with increasing female proportion), production related services and public/private services.

The actual debate concerning economic growth and the development of employment and unemployment takes two thing not really into account: the regional differences between East and West (or most region in East and most region in West) and the gender-specific challenges in East and West as East German women’s orientations towards paid work are still different from West German women.

---

\(^3\) All following data are taken by the Microcensus 1998 and published in the German Report to the European Social Fund - Period 2000 – 2006, National Action plan for the Intervention Target 3, Berlin 2000
1.3 Trends in gender equality

As already mentioned the socialdemocrat/green government announced a more comprehensive and modern policy in gender-related issues. The government programme after the election in autumn 1998 listed a whole series of policy areas in which the government planned new regulations and institutions and initiatives concerning women’s position in the economic and social sphere. Part of these initiatives are put into practice, for example in the programme "women and work". This includes new apprenticeship programmes, new university programmes and a new legal regulation of the parental leave and parental allowances. Other are still not developed (a law on equal opportunities covering the private sector, changes in pension schemes) and again others had already been cancelled (any changes in the tax-splitting system). New investment in public child-care are not under consideration – the new Länder reduce the child care facilities and the old Länder do not develop new ones. Most of the gender-related initiatives are part of the NAPs and will be commented in this part of the report.

Mainstreaming activities seem to have a high priority but are not implemented in the government decision making process in detail – so there is a substantial lack in policy implementation and analysis. For example: not one women at all, not one representative of the Ministry for Women etc. are participating in the central talks of the “Bündnis für Arbeit” (Alliance for Job – the full Title is “Alliance for Work, Training and Competitiveness”) talks although the meetings cover all areas of the national employment strategy.

2. Assessing the implementation of gender mainstreaming

(I had problems to differentiate between the given sub-points – the following section covers therefore the different aspects mentioned in the paper, but does not follow the strict outline)
As already mentioned is the new approach of the German government towards women’s employment a more positive one than the approach of the former government. The increase of women’s employment is seen as a goal of employment policy and the government programme “women and work” includes a whole series of new initiatives, legal regulations and institutional changes concerning gender mainstreaming on the level of decision making in the government and in all departments/ministries of the federal government. But the implementation of the new initiatives is rather slow.

Some general assessments concerning the NAP 2000

1. the government announces in Guideline 18 “the establishment of an inter-ministry work group at the executive level for the improvement of equality” and “the development of a catalogue of criteria and measures for further training that will result in a stronger consideration of gender-specific questions in ongoing work and action planning of the Federal Government” and announces the inclusion of a new paragraph “equality policy” in the upcoming revision of the joint standing orders of the Federal Government and to conduct a check for compatibility with equality principles”. Announcements like these can be found in the NAP 1998 and 1999 – the process of decision making and implementing seems to be more complicated. How necessary such a step would be is documented in a report on the results of the 4th world congress of women (in Beijing) for which all Federal Ministries had been asked to document their understanding of mainstreaming and the changes in policy and programmes as a result of mainstreaming. The documents show that most Ministries have changed only little, some do not even reflect mainstreaming as a necessity, most Ministries understand mainstreaming as promotion of female employees in their own Ministry and only few understand and develop a concept of what mainstreaming could/would mean in policy development, budgets, instruments etc. What is obvious in the documents is that the Ministry of Family, Older People, Women and Youth, which is responsible for gender-related questions, is sensitive on these questions, but has little power and money to influence the policy of the other Ministries. In the other Ministries it is mainly the Ministry for Education and Research, which has included

---

mainstreaming in most of its programmes on a more coherent base and – partially – the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs.

2. The NAP 2000 includes – in more pillars than ever – the category “sex” as a descriptive part of the programme. This is true in nearly all pillars of the NAP, except Guideline 9 (disabled people; foreign nationals – in both areas a gender-related analysis would be necessary). In Guideline 14 tax policy family allowances and child-related tax reliefs are mentioned (these are necessary due to a court-decision of our highest Constitutional Court) – there is no mentioning of the tax-splitting system for married couples although this is under critique and a change of the tax-splitting system had been announced in the government programme of December 1998. Although a revision of tax systems is part of Guideline 18, the government ignores that part and does not comment on this probably negative incentive concerning women’s employment propensity. In Guideline 17 (Improving Knowledge and Skills of Employees) women are not mentioned, although women’s participation in company-based further training is lower than men’s and there is a special problem concerning female job-returners and their “human-capital” after longer periods of housework (in all levels of job hierarchies) and – as far as I know – within the evaluation of 30 integrated company development projects the question of whether women participated or not is not part of the scientific evaluation.

3. Although women’s participation or proportion is mentioned in nearly all other Guidelines (which is a progress towards the earlier NAPs and a result of changed policy orientations), the mentioning of women and the design of programmes are not always consistent: for example: once you mention the small proportion of female apprentices in the craft sector (page 25, Guideline 8), you would expect measures/programmes/aimes in the following section – but this is not the case. The gender-aspect of the apprenticeship places in the craft sector is ignored in the following paragraphs and women are mentioned in other programmes like computer science (which is very ok) – but this shows that the integration of gender-specific data does not lead to gender-sensitive aimes/initiatives in the NAP automatically. How to increase women’s proportion in craft-related apprenticeships and jobs (except hairdressers) is an open question (some good local initiatives of chambers of crafts could be found) and there is a connection between self-employment and women’s
low proportion in craft jobs, as a relevant part of Germany's self-employed is in craft-related areas.

- Evaluation is missing: Both in Guideline 1 and 2 women's proportion of young unemployed, long term unemployed and among the participants in general are mentioned. What is lacking is any information on policy input/output by sex (tables on Guideline 1 and 2 on page 46,47) and – more relevant – an analysis whether the measures and initiatives are appropriate to include long-term unemployed women resp. young women. What we may learn from the text in other guidelines (guideline 21) is that employment offices and employment promotion law had to be amended because of unclear and inconsistent regulations concerning inactive women, female returners and other “long-term” unemployed women. I mentioned this inconsistency already in my comment on the 1998 NAP – the Government changed it in 1999 to make women's participation in active labour market programmes easier. Following information provided by the Federal Employment Service is the employment integration of long term unemployed women not very successful, whereas the participation of young women in job creation and training programmes is more successful. Nevertheless: although the Government in Guideline 19 states that women participate in active labour market measures proportionally to their share in unemployment, the table in the Statistical annex (page 52) shows a falling proportion of women (compared to 1998) in job creation programmes, in programmes for structural adjustments and in nearly all other programmes – so that the overall proportion is falling from 51.4% to 50.0%. The picture given by this table is misleading as there is a big difference in women's employment/unemployment and labour market policy participation in East and West Germany...unfortunately the Government does not present any regional data for East and West separately5.

- In some areas the Government has not developed statistics and methods of evaluation, like in pay (mentioned on page 40), in parental leave participation of men (the data given on page 54 are the best we have) and in other parts it did not use the data and evaluation available (like in labour market programmes etc.). One of the main “equality” issues is a scientific report on women's situation in employment and pay (mentioned on page 41) which may close the gap between the pure integration

---

5 The Federal Employment Service published a detailed report on women's employment, unemployment and participation in labour market programmes last week – maybe I can include some of the results in an annex next week.
of women’s proportion into the NAP and the design of real measures based on analysis.

4. Negative examples of mainstreaming are to be found in all policy areas connected with early retirement and the policy of social partners: early retirement schemes (especially the scheme on part-time for older employees) are now open for part-time working (women), too. The integration of part-timers into this scheme is mentioned as being beneficial for women (page 9, Guideline 4b, Guideline 16) – but the proportion of older women in the labour force is rather small, for most older women the official retirement age is still 60 and therefore all public and collectively bargained subsidies for older workers choosing part-time work will be allocated with male workers. The part-time early retirement policy stand in clear contrast to the recommendations of the EU concerning Germanys policy towards older workers and is a policy directed towards male workers which fulfil the pension scheme criteria and have therefore the privilege of a rather high (statutory) pension (see for example page 19). Women’s employment biographies are different and the part-time option for early retirement is no incentive at all. As both Government and social partners agreed to continue this policy path, this is an ongoing male-streaming and not a main-streaming!!!

Although social partners are mentioned in the points “skilled part-time work both for men and women” and “improvement of pay equality” (Guideline 15, Guideline 19) I do not know any concrete projects, aimes or targets really being part of the Alliance for Job Talks, papers or recommendations. Maybe it is to secret to be published....but as already mentioned the central talks are “free of women” both as persons/politicians or as subjects.

5. Examples of good mainstreaming are the action programme of the Government on “Innovations and Jobs in the Information society of the 21st century” which includes equality targets in each part of the programme (details are on page 9, Guideline 6, Guideline 8, Guideline 13) and the example of best practice Women in the Information Society (page 57). These programmes include both mainstreaming, target setting, extra budgets for women-only programmes etc. and I agree with the Government that it is “good practice”. The Programme “Equal Opportunities for Women in Research and Teaching at Universities” (p.41, Guideline 19) is a good
example for clear targets, clear budgets although, compared to the overall amount spent in universities, it is a small programme. But it helps to initiate things which would not have been possible without this additional programme.

3. Assessing the priority of gender equality

Since NAP 1999 and the Programme “women and work” gender equality has a higher priority in governmental policy – but as already mentioned, not in all parts and Ministries. The budget of the Ministry of Family, Elderly, Women and Youth is small and had not been increased during the last two years. Due to public household constraints it was declining. The Ministry has to convince other Ministries like Labour and Social Affairs to target parts of their programmes towards women or gender equality. This was more successful with the Ministry of Education and Research than with the Ministry of Finance (responsible for the tax reforms) or Internal Affairs (co-responsible for the development of the joint standing orders and the implementation and evaluation of the public sector equal opportunities programme) or the Ministry of Justice (co-responsible for the development of a law on equality in the private sector).

Within employment policy in a more narrow definition it seems that the measures of gender mainstreaming and equality policy had been implemented more successful in the Employment Service than in other public areas. The obligation to install female officials responsible for this task in every employment service office in Germany seems to bring fruits in more gender-sensitive policy. The aims and initiatives set in the NAP 2000 in the 4th pillar reflect the ongoing activities, most of them are “weak” activities like dialogue forums to discuss equal opportunity legislation for the private sector (the government had announced a law on equal opportunities in the private sector within the first 4 years of its governmental time....now the strategy is to discuss instead of develop a law) or a Congress to evaluate “women and work. The budget mentioned in Guideline 19 is a joke (just to give one figure: the tax-splitting systems itself “costs” the State a yearly amount of 35 billion DM (35 Milliarden DM ca. 17 Millarden Euro). Guideline 20 does not fully express the truth: on paper very child has the right to a kindergarten place, but in practice these kindergartens are (in more than 50%) only in the mornings, without meals etc. The right is only a right to a 5 hours opening. As mentioned in our care report, there is a big problem with childcare
especially in southern Germany and in non-urbanised areas, and a still good situation in East Germany. Due to household constraints and a falling number of children, East German Länder and communities start to close child-care facilities.

The Ministry for...Women...just recently proposed its revision of the parental leave act – the proposal is widely agreed by critical feminists as it will give a right both to the father and mother to take parental leave together and to combine parental allowance with a 30 hours part-time job (today only one parent and part-time only with less than 19 hours). Parents rights towards their employers will be stronger than before. Furthermore the proposal includes an incentive to return to work faster than before by offering a higher amount of parental allowance if the leave is shorter than one year – an open question is still the lack of child-care for children under 3. The parental leave act has not yet passed the relevant democratic procedures. We have to wait for the results at the end.

The other initiatives mentioned in Guideline 20 are all in the category “awareness rising” – ok, but not really big steps.

Care for elderly etc. is an open and widely unsolved problem, as the points mentioned in Guideline 20 are very weak and without any practical relevance. What is more important is what the Government states in Guideline 13 (services), that it implements measures for social infrastructure, especially in the East and takes the initiative for an analysis of the reorganisation of care professions (highly segregated female semi-professions) – what is the aim? To upgrade these professions? To create a low wage sector in care???? The attitude towards social/public services is still ambivalent as the Government has to maintain a low public deficit in public finance.

4. Priority areas for future action and identification of best practice

The Government has no real policy programmes regarding vertical segregation. i.e. women in decision making, women in higher paid positions and promotion of women within companies in the private and public sector. It is only in the university programme that there are targets defined: page 40 describes that actual situation, the aim is to increase women's proportion among professors within the next 10 years
up to 20% (this aim is realistic). All other areas of vertical segregation are not
covered.
The government is weak in all parts of equality deficits that are part of the
arrangements with the social partners: no initiatives in part-time for men and in higher
paid positions, no campaign for wage equality, no campaign for a legal regulation on
equal opportunities in private firms etc. The Alliance for Job is the least arena to
discuss gender mainstreaming in the whole set of German institutions – even the
Federal Employment Service is more gender-mainstreamed.

**Best practice:**

the two gender-related examples chosen by the government are good examples – I
would recommend them both as good practice:

**Women in the Information Society**

**Initiative Germany 21 (D21)**

The initiative “Germany 21 – Departure into the Information Age” is a company
initiative to promote the change from the industrial to the informational era
spanning many sectors of industry. The Federal Government is participating in
from of a Public-Private-Partnership in projects and actions to promote the
accelerated dissemination and use of modern information and communications
technology in Germany. One main task of the initiative is to promote equal
opportunities for women and men in the information society. Measures are being
developed to increase the percentage of girls and women in the IT-training
professions and courses. A survey of all D21-companies is currently being
conducted to create, within the framework of a model, 1000 additional training
places for young women in the new IT-professions. The initiative shall be used in
close co-operation with all participants, to further improve training opportunities to
benefit the target group and companies.

The workgroup further intends to support projects to broaden technical courses of
study for women and to publicise Best-Practice-Examples of telework and
innovative ways of women setting up companies in the IT-sector. It is planned to
award a Women@ElectronicWorkAward, to reward exceptional personal
dedication and vision of women in utilising new communications technologies.

“Women on the Web”

The joint action of the initiative “Women give new Impetus to Technology”, in co-
operation with the Federal Government, the Federal Employment Service, and
companies, have offered women since September 22, 1999, free access to the
Internet. The enormous interest of women is reflected in the following numbers: all 33,000 Internet accounts were taken after just 5 days, nearly 16,000 inquiries were received, and the homepage “Women on the Web” registered 1.4 million visits.

Female trainers from the Women-Computer-Schools, technical centres, and further training institutions provided an introduction to and supervision for the first steps in the electronic world. The rooms were well equipped with electronic devices and had enough computers to provide opportunities to log onto the Net for the first time or to broaden existing experience. This completed action and additional future actions shall ensure that, besides the well educated professional women, women with minimal access to computer technology, homemakers and women with reduced job opportunities will recognise the value of the Internet and learn to properly use it for future training and further training.

**Expert Comment:** this initiative is chosen as an example of best practice as it includes two different dimensions of equality deficits: women’s participation in technical jobs and in jobs using IT as a central part of work is rather low (see Table in the annex of the NAP). This has negative effects concerning women’s position in the future labour markets both in qualitative and quantitative terms. The initiative is a mixed activity, including government, firms, scientists, the social partners and the media and it is mainstreaming, as it includes a mainstreaming approach in all parts of the programme and has a women only part of the programme and the budget.

**Easing the Reintegration into the Labour Market**

Through special support programs, Lower Saxony created 13 co-ordination places in some certain regions for the professional and internal promotion of women within companies. These programs contribute to a reduction in problems for women re-entering the job market, returning from parental leave, and who experience long-term unemployment and, thereby, secure jobs. In co-operation with regional companies concepts have been developed for more family-friendly working conditions. Areas of concern for the co-ordination places are:

- Guidance for the above-mentioned target groups,
- Implementation of job-oriented qualification measures, and
- Organising the association of regional companies which will use the services of the co-ordination place.

Joining forces of small and medium-size companies into associations can promote the implementation of measures to promote women which otherwise could only be realised in large companies. For example, this includes training of women returning from parental leave free of charge and arranging of vacation coverage or job placement within the association. The success of the measures promoting women within an association depends largely on its size. The more companies belong to the association the more opportunities for further training it can offer and the more it can accommodate women returning from parental leave. The larger the association is the stronger the attraction is for new companies to join for economic considerations. Through the implementation of the above-mentioned
tasks, the co-ordination places serve as a very important link between the regional economy, the labour market and the women residing in its area.

**Expert comments:** the initiative in Lower Saxony is a joint project that involves local actors like the local chambers, SMEs, trade union and the Länder government. It addresses two points: the reintegration of female job returners (in case of parental leave or long-term unemployment) within SMEs, which is often a difficult process for both parts (employers which do not know exactly what skills returners have and what training etc. they need and women which do not know exactly how to start a new employment, how to combine work and family etc.). As a high percentage of women is employed in SME, the project helps to identify special problems and special solutions for SMEs and female job returners. The Lower Saxony project stands as representative for similar projects in other parts of Germany. What makes it different is the creation of institutionalised help by creating local centers to coordinate the activities and to activate SMEs.