EGGE – EC’s Expert Group on Gender and Employment

Assessment of the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion from a Gender Perspective

Austria

2003

EWERC, Manchester School of Management, UMIST

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GENDER ASSESSMENT OF THE NAP INCLUSION 2003

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September 2003

Report for the EU-Group of Experts “Gender and Employment”, co-ordinated by Jill Rubery and the UMIST co-ordinating team for the Equal Opportunities Unit, DG V, Commission of the European Union
Grid One: gender mainstreaming and gender issues raised by the Member states under the various objectives

Please cite what is in the NAPs and as close as possible to the way it is written without interpretation or assessment

Definitions

**Gender mainstreaming** = GM: concerns (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages by the actors normally involved in policy making.

**Specific measures:** with a view to ensuring equality in practice between men and women, Member States may maintain or introduce specific measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to sex.

Column 1: *in italic* = extracts from the common NAP’s outline

Columns 2 and 3: Comments made are not exhaustive but highlight some key points to be checked

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAP outline</th>
<th>Gender mainstreaming</th>
<th>Specific gender issues/specific measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1- Major trends and challenges – "including indicators broken down by sex + showing gender characteristics" | ▪ Types of stats and indicators disaggregated by sex:  
  - Risk of poverty: women 14%, men 10%;  
  - According to age group those over 65(29% women and 14% men) have the highest risk (p. 3)  
  ▪ what is missing:  
  - Other indicators used – like poverty risks of lone parents, households with 3 and more children, only one person is in employment, long-term unemployed people, people, at most, have completed compulsory education, people with disabilities – are not disaggregated by sex (pp. 3-4); | Please mention specific stats and indicators to identify gender issues:  
  - Better employment opportunities for mothers are required (p. 4) |
2- Review of progress during 2002/2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have some gender gaps have been reduced:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The employment rate for women exceeded 60% for the first time, primarily due to rising levels of part-time work (p. 7-8);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Looking at educational trends vertically, girls have already overtaken boys (p. 8; see also Joint Report on Social Inclusion 2002, p. 150)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes in policies:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Replacement of the government’s declaration to support the principal of “equal pay for equal work or work of the same value” by efforts to guarantee a monthly gross income for full-time employees of at least €1000, and that up to this level no income tax will have to be paid. Women will be the main beneficiaries (p. 23);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New initiatives relating to GM:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Long-term unemployed people who do not receive unemployment assistance because</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement or deterioration of specific gender problems:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Due to the swift extension of mobile care facilities, the burden on family members providing care – mostly women – has been noticeably reduced (p. 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes in policies: No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Replacement of “individual pension rights for women” by a minimum pension for everyone (affecting women especially) (p. 11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New initiatives:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The Government program includes the granting of a right to part-time work until the child’s seventh birthday and after the right to return to full-time employment (p. 26);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Primary and secondary indicators (1a, 1b, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13 and 17) only mentioned in the appendix; the other indicators are not disaggregated by sex or even missing in the appendix;
- No gender mainstreaming of the “challenges” mentioned in the NAPIncl, only the general statement that “the opportunities of girls and women are being further significantly increased by the implementation of gender mainstreaming in employment and other areas of life;” (p. 4)
they are not suffering great hardship are to have periods of unemployment recognised as non-contributory qualifying periods for pension insurance in future (mostly women) (p. 31);

3 – Strategic approach, main objectives and key targets
“targets should be disaggregated by sex whenever available + if relevant”

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extract on GM:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mention specific measures for disadvantaged sex:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 12 key targets mentioned;</td>
<td>- Target 3: Closing the gaps in provisions for socially disadvantaged people: improvements for mothers by increasing pension credits for child raising periods (p. 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Three gendered targets: target 3: Closing the gaps in provisions for socially disadvantaged people: introduction of a minimum pension for everyone (affecting women especially) (p. 11); target 7: Improved reconciliation of family and work: e.g. the right to part-time work, childcare allowance, family hospice leave (p. 12); target 8: Gender-relevant issues concerning social exclusion: in most sections of the NAP, gender-relevant aspects are described which should help to increase women’s opportunities (p. 12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Targets disaggregated by sex:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hardly an quantified targets set; targets not disaggregated by sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 – Policy measures
“indicate how the gender perspective has been taken on board”

4.1.1 facilitating participation in employment
4.1.2 Facilitating access to resources
   a) social protection
   b) housing and basic services

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mention approach as presented in the NAP:</strong></td>
<td><strong>List dedicated measures and financial resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Political measures are divided up into two main chapters and several sub-chapters: 4.1. Promoting access to resources, rights, goods and services: 4.1.1. Education; 4.1.2. Working Life; 4.1.3. The reconciliation of family and working life; 4.1.4. Monetary social protection; 4.1.5. Health; 4.1.6. Housing; 4.1.7. Regional disparities; 4.2. Measures and plans for vulnerable groups: 4.2.1. Children;</td>
<td><strong>4.1.1. Education:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Action plan “Gender Mainstreaming and support for Women in School and Adult Education;</td>
<td>- Large scale projects “Ready” and “Girls and Technology” - directed towards girls in secondary modern and polytechnic schools;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The project “Women into Technology” 2001-2006 provides targeted counselling and information for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c) healthcare
d) education, justice, other services

4.2 Prevent risks of exclusion
4.2.1. knowledge society, ICT
4.2.2. prevent life crisis
4.2.3. preserve family solidarity

4.3. help the most vulnerable
4.3.1. those at risk of persistent poverty
4.3.2. children
4.3.3. areas marked by exclusion

4.2.2. Women; 4.2.3. Families; 4.2.4. People with disabilities; 4.2.5. People requiring long-term care; 4.2.6. Asylum seekers, migrants; 4.2.7. People with excessive debts; 4.2.8. Homeless people; 4.2.9. People who have committed criminal offences (pp. 13-52)

- Sub-chapter 4.1.1. Education and 4.1.2. Working Life include specific chapters on gender/women’s issues;
- All sub-chapters – with the exception of 4.1.6. Housing – refer to women or girls, but some sub-chapters only by re-describing their current situation and not by mentioning specific political measures

4.1.2. Working Life:
- The Public Employment Service (PES) has the explicit order to take measures against a gender-specific segmentation of the labour market. Since the year 2000, the gender mainstreaming approach has been gradually implemented in the planning and execution of labour market measures. The strategy of gender mainstreaming is supplemented by a focus which is specific to women within the framework of both the annual targets and the ESF programme. In addition, the targets set by the Minister for Economic Affairs and Labour ensure that at least 50% of the support budget benefits women (p. 18)
- With regard to the Community initiatives EQUAL 11 development partnerships are working for the reduction of gender-specific (labour market) segregation (p. 22)
- TEPs: gender mainstreaming experts are involved in the partnerships and employment projects for women and men over 45 (p. 23);
- Efforts to guarantee a monthly gross income for full-time employees of at least €1000, and that up to this level no income tax will have to be paid. Women will be the main beneficiaries (p. 23);
- From 2003 onwards new severance pay for
all employees form the first day of work – now also women with shorter employment contracts could acquire a claim (p. 24)

4.1.3. The reconciliation of family and working life:

- Initiatives from the Länder and municipalities, which are responsible for child-care facilities, will facilitate the setting up of mixed-age groups in nursery schools for one and a half to six year olds in the coming years. They will also include extending the network of day nurseries (for looking after 1 to 3 year olds) and the extension of care by child-minders. In addition, the opening hours are to be more closely orientated towards the demands made by the working hours of the parents (p. 25);

- Child-care subsidy (a means-tested benefit for child-mining cost) granted by the PES (p. 25);

- National competition «The Best Women-Friendly and Family-Friendly Companies» (p. 26);

- The Government program includes the granting of a right to part-time work until the child’s seventh birthday and after the right to return to full-time employment (p. 26)

4.1.4. Monetary social protection:

- With regard to the «Pension Reform 2003» the period of time used to calculate the pensions (assessment basis) is to be extended from currently 15 to 40 years. Periods spent
bringing up children (amounting to three years per children) and periods spent on family hospice leave will however be subtracted from the assessment basis); as of 2004 twenty-four months form the birth of the child (six month more than under current provision) will be counted as contributory periods; the special assessment basis for child raising periods will be increased (p. 29);

- Long-term unemployed people who do not receive unemployment assistance because they are not suffering great hardship are to have periods of unemployment recognised as non-contributory qualifying periods for pension insurance in future (mostly women) (p. 31)

4.1.7. Regional disparities:

- «Leader Plus» measures: projects include qualification measures, further education, etc. particularly for women and girls (p. 35)

4.2.2. Women:

- This sub-chapter mentions or repeats all the women and/or gender specific measures mentioned in the other chapters (pp. 38-39)

4.2.3. Families:

- Help centres for women;
- Several initiatives in order to combat “violence against women” or to help who are suffering from violence in families (pp. 39-40);
- Measures to prevent women being disadvantaged
4.2.6. Asylum Seekers, Migrants:
- Obligation for immigrants to acquire proficiency in German – can contribute to promoting the integration of women (p. 49)

4.2.7. People with excessive debts:
- A research project on the issue of young people’s debts is being carried out, starting from a gender-specific point of view;
- A group of experts is to examine the effectiveness of existing policy tools. The main emphasis is – inter alia – on guarantors (particularly women) (p. 50)

5 – Institutional arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant bodies, those at risk of exclusion, NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement of Equality bodies, NGOs, others specific organisations:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Involvement of gender mainstreaming experts in the TEP’s, which play an important role in the conception of employment policy measures with regard to combating poverty (p. 53);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community initiative EQUAL: development partnerships are working for the reduction of gender-specific segregation (p 54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Balanced participation of women and men in committees involved in drafting and implementing the NAPs:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Information missing in the NAPincl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Grid two: Assessment of gender mainstreaming**

Taking into account the gender perspective in the identification of challenges, the design, implementation and assessment of policies and measures, the selection of indicators and targets and the involvement of stakeholders.

GM = gender mainstreaming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main NAP fields of assessment</th>
<th>Main questions to be raised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Progress made since last NAP | - Importance given to gender issues  
- To what extend have they been dealt with and how, compared to the commitment taken by MS in their NAP 2001?  
  - Although the current situation of women is mentioned time and again throughout the whole NAPIncl little attention is paid to gender specific measures and gender issues are dealt with superficially;  
  - Little progress mentioned and made since the last NAPIncl;  
  - The positive impact of the extension of mobile care facilities mentioned in the NAPIncl has not been substantiated by means of evaluations or research projects  
  - Replacement of the planned introduction of “individual pension rights for women” with the idea of a means-tested minimum pension for everyone *carried out via the social assistance systems of the Länder; p. 30)* |
| Identification of challenges | - Importance given to GM and Gender issues in the key identified challenges  
- Comment in the light of the other challenges mentioned:  
  - Although the NAPIncl stresses the importance of an overall gender mainstreaming approach, the challenges mentioned are not gender mainstreamed;  
  - The only gender issue mentioned is the necessity to improve employment opportunities for mothers |
| Statistics and indicators | - Assess the means for/use of gender analysis  
- Assess the extent to which statistics and indicators cover the gender issues |
- Compare with the set of commonly agreed indicators (see Indicators sub-group report)
- Compare with the treatment of gender issues in the identification of challenges
- What has been dealt with adequately?
- What is missing?
  - There are several specific chapters to describe the situation of women, mostly without specific indicators or statistics;
  - Most of the commonly agreed indicators (disaggregated by sex) are only mentioned in the appendix with very little impact on the strategic approach and the targets of the NAPIncl;
  - There is no adequate treatment of problems – highlighted even by the indicators mentioned in the appendix – such as the increasing gender pay gap and the poverty risk of long-term unemployed women and women aged over 65

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic approach and targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess the importance/attention given to GM – assess the resources (financial, human, organisational,…) allocated to it – see also part on “mobilising all stakeholders”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess the importance given to gender in the choice of quantitative (qualitative?) targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the targets consistent with the identified challenges?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - Little importance is given to gender issues and gender mainstreaming regarding the strategic approach and the 12 key targets mentioned;
  - With regard to the gendered target 3 (introduction of a minimum pension and specific measures for mothers) and target 7 (right to part-time work), no binding time schedules or financial allocation are mentioned and target 8, which refers to the overall gender-specific approach, remains rather vague;
  - Also with regard to political measures (e.g. “minimum income” of € 1.000: improvements in the unemployment scheme and extension of care by child-minders; see above) no time schedules or financial allocation mentioned |
| Design of policies and measures | - Assess importance/attention given to/ability demonstrated for GM  
- Assess the balance between gender mainstreaming and specific measures:  
  - In what circumstances/in response to which common objective are specific measures chosen?  
  - In what circumstances/in response to which common objectives is gender mainstreamed?  
  - Is gender considered/mainstreamed in measures for vulnerable groups (disability, homelessness ...)?  
- Gender mainstreaming and specific measures mentioned are quite balanced;  
- Gender is in some ways mainstreamed or mentioned with regard to: 4.1.1. Education (action plan); 4.1.2. Working Life (PES; TEP’s; income from employment; severance pay); 4.1.4. Monetary social protection (unemployment benefit);  
- Specific measures are set with regard to: 4.1.1. Education (projects and ICT courses); 4.1.2. Working Life (PES; EQUAL); 4.1.3. Reconciliation of family and working life (child-minders; child-care subsidy; right to part-time); 4.1.4. Monetary social protection (pension system); 4.1.7 Regional disparities (“Leader Plus”);  
- Gender is also mainstreamed in a measure for People with excessive debts (guarantors) and Migrants, but the described measure for migrants (obligation to acquire proficiency in German) does not seem fit to reduce exclusion of migrants in general and of migrant women in particular;  
- Measures for Children, People with disabilities, People in need of long-term care and Homeless are not mainstreamed. |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Implementation of policies and measures | - Monitoring and assessment of policies  
- “mobilisation of relevant stakeholders”  
  - Assess the means for/use of/reference to gender impact assessment  
  - Although the importance of gender mainstreaming with regard to the conception and evaluation of measures is mentioned with the NAPIncl (p. 38), only one study commissioned to evaluate the measures of the “employment campaign for people with disabilities” (p. 21) stresses a gender-specific dimension  
- to what extent have stakeholders for gender issues have been involved (and how relevant are the stakeholders that have been involved for gender issues?) |
- references to mobilise gender equality bodies are not included;
- only gender mainstreaming experts within the TEPs are mentioned

**Overall assessment**

- Has gender been mainstreamed consistently across the NAP
- To what extend has it been mainstreamed and how?
- summarise the strengths and the weaknesses of the approach
- compared it with previous NAP
- Assess the overall balance between GM and specific measures:
  - Similar to the previous NAPInc, the situation of women is described time and again throughout the whole NAPInc, but there is no consistent gender mainstreaming approach, especially with regard to challenges and key targets;
  - With regard to the political measures, gender mainstreaming and specific measures mentioned are quite balanced, but with regard to challenges, strategic approach and targets little importance is given to either gender mainstreaming and gender/women’s issues;
  - One great “weakness” or even problem of this NAPInc is that political measures which are likely to have a rather negative impact on the social and financial situation of women and therefore on gender equality are presented as positive measures: e.g. the Pension Reform of 2003 will lead to a further reduction (up to 10%) of the already rather low pension benefits of women, which the specific measures for mothers mentioned in the report will not be able to compensate for. This is especially problematic in the light of the high poverty risk of women aged over 65, which is even mentioned in the appendix of the NAPInc. What is more, the announced introduction of “individual pension rights for women” has been replaced with the idea of a means-tested minimum pension for everyone, which is a very negative example of the changes that have taken place since the last NAPInc;
  - Neither does the current NAPInc mention the negative impact of the introduction of the childcare allowance, which has been highlighted in a recent study;
  - Other, quite useful measures, such as the introduction of a right to part-time work for parents and the improvement of unemployment assistance, are included without any binding time schedule and financial allocation;
  - No particular attention is paid to the still increasing gender pay gap (with the exception of minimum income, no other measures are mentioned) and the persistent lack of child-care facilities in Austria is also dealt with rather inadequately.
### Grid three: gender proofing in good practice presented by Member States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practices mentioned</th>
<th>Q-1 Gender dimension</th>
<th>Q-2 Gender proofing</th>
<th>Q-3 Positive impact on gender equality</th>
<th>Q-4 Negative impact on gender equality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child care allowance</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Women with small children are now less often and for shorter periods in an insecure financial or social position (p. 55)</td>
<td>In the short term, policies such as childcare benefits and minimum pension insurance periods that take childcare periods into account may contribute to reducing risk of poverty and to increasing women’s entitlement to – minimum – pension in their own right. In the long run, however, both childcare benefit and minimum pension insurance periods that take childcare periods into account encourage women to take longer career breaks and thus reduce women’s income opportunities (cf. Mairhuber 2003:37). According to the first findings of a current empirical study (Lutz 2003:227), “the new regime – so far – has led to a longer withdrawal of women from the labour market, without resulting in a stronger involvement of fathers in the care of younger children. It is true that women with young children no longer find themselves in a financially insecure situation for as long a time as in the past, but their labour market participation and, above all, their level of active employment has declined</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Child care allowance is a good practice mentioned in the context of gender proofing. It focuses on reducing gender gaps and sex discrimination. The practice aims to ensure that women are not placed in an insecure financial or social position by providing childcare benefits and minimum pension insurance periods that account for childcare periods. This practice is expected to contribute to reducing the risk of poverty and increasing women’s entitlement to pension in their own right. However, it has also been noted that the new regime has led to a longer withdrawal of women from the labour market, without a corresponding increase in fathers’ involvement in childcare. This has resulted in women’s income opportunities being reduced. The practice is likely to reduce gender gaps and sex discrimination.
at the same time. The percentage of women returning to the labour market before their children reach the age of 2\(\frac{1}{4}\) years has dropped from 54% to 35%. The decline in employment was strongest among women who had their children at early age, women with several children, and women in low-paid jobs”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements and development plans for the provision of long-term care</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Could have a positive impact, since women are still the main care providers within the family and the neighbourhood and therefore disadvantaged with regard to gainful employment possibilities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearing: assistance for young people in their transition from school to working life</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Could have a positive impact if special attention was paid to girls, because in Austria girls, in particular, suffer transition problems (but: no specific measures for girls mentioned!).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour market integration measures for recipients of social assistance</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Could have a negative impact if gender-specific role models (e.g. gainful employment less important for women than for men; high-paid jobs for men and low-paid jobs for women; integration of women into “traditional female jobs” and men into “traditional male jobs”) are prevalent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**References:**


European Commission (2002): Joint report on social inclusion, Luxembourg

\(^{1}\) All extracts *in italics* are quotes from the Austrian NAPIincl 2003-2005.