



LE GOUVERNEMENT  
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG  
Ministère de l'Égalité des chances

**MAKING GENDER EQUALITY**

**A REALITY**

**Gender  
equality  
plan  
2015-2018**

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# MAKING GENDER EQUALITY A REALITY

The new government has made gender equality one of its policy priorities by declaring in the preamble of the 2014 government programme that *“efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, social cohesion and **equal opportunities** are the guiding principles that characterise the action of the Government.”*

Through this Action Plan, the government is committed to promoting equality between women and men in all areas and at all levels of society.

It has been established based on the following:

- The government programme of 2013;
- The main conclusions of the scientific evaluation of the Gender equality plan (National Action Plan on Equality) 2009-2014;
- The policy priorities of the Ministry of Equal Opportunities;
- The policy priorities identified by other ministerial departments in areas of gender equality.

# I. Evaluation of the National Action Plan on Equality (NAP) 2009 - 2014

The implementation of the NAP on Equality 2009-2014 has been subject to a permanent support process using an external expert whose mission included, where necessary, making recommendations to the players concerned. The works in question had been entrusted to Professor Robert Plasman of the Free University of Brussels, who can draw on established experience and expertise with regard to both the Luxembourg context and the subject of gender mainstreaming.

Given their connection with this action plan, some of his findings are set out below:

## 1. Governance

*“The Ministry of Equal Opportunities has carried out important tasks with regard to the process of implementation of the Equality and gender mainstreaming policies. The ministry shall continue its work after the conclusion of the action plan. The co-operation of the MEGA with other ministries for the implementation the action plan could still be improved.”*

*Close cooperation between the MEGA and other ministries when preparing the “next” action plan is to be considered, and, if implemented, this cooperation is expected to continue throughout and beyond the implementation of the plan.”*

*“The Inter-Ministerial Committee will continue its work after the formal conclusion of the action plan of 2009 - 2014, given that its operation is regulated by the coordinated text of 6 March 2006 of the Grand Ducal regulation as amended on 31 March 1996. In order to ensure the success of the Committee’s future activities, it is necessary to clarify the role of the members. The changes to be made to improve visibility and strengthen the decision-making side of the Committee will have to be examined. The involvement of management and the appointment of officials with decision-making power shall be the first elements to be examined. The Committee’s work will also be continuously communicated within ministerial departments. The tasks of the Committee as provided for by the Grand Ducal Regulation are very ambitious. If the Committee is unable to accomplish all these tasks, the Ministry of Equal Opportunities and the representatives of other ministries must confer with each other and develop a work plan based on the priorities.”*

## 2. Integration of the gender perspective into all policies

*“The importance of integrating the gender perspective into policy work in order to improve the quality, effectiveness, fairness and consistency of public policies remains underestimated in the ministries.”*

*International experience has shown that without a strong political will to create a consensus on equality and a culture of gender equality, the policy of gender mainstreaming could prove difficult to implement.”*

## 3. Training on gender equality

*“Gender training must begin at the highest level and take into account all employees of the administration. The training and all other activities focusing on strengthening the capacity (e.g. workshops) must not only aim to educate employees on gender issues, but also highlight the manner in which each person within the administration can practice gender equality and integrate it into their work.”*

*Thus, the government intends to adapt the training offer made to the officials of the ministries and administrations according to the requirements expressed by those concerned.*

## II. Policy priorities of the Ministry of Equal Opportunities (MEGA)

The main tasks of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities are as follows:

- to combat inequalities between women and men,
- promote gender equality as well as a balanced representation of women and men in all areas and at all levels.

The philosophy behind this idea is to respect, in all areas (work, leisure, family, education, health, environment, third world aid and others) the specific requirements and interests of both men and women.

The government will develop the “gender mainstreaming” dimension with regard to both public institutions and the communes.

### 1. Better governance

#### a. The preparation of the Equality Plan 2015-2018

The Gender equality plan 2009 - 2014 was developed by the MEGA alone on the basis of 12 action areas identified in 1995 by the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing Platform).

This approach had two major drawbacks:

- It included the priorities defined at and for a global audience, which did not necessarily correspond to the challenges facing Luxembourg in terms of gender equality;
- It also limited the role of the ministers concerned to executing objectives and policy measures which they were not involved in defining.

In order to document the collective responsibility of the government as regards equality of women and men, the procedure for preparing this gender equality plan 2015-2018 has been modified in view of involving each ministerial department in a more direct and concrete manner.

The chapter of the governmental programme for gender equality is ambitious and cannot be implemented solely by the MEGA: the execution of policy objectives in this regard is a collective and transverse responsibility.

It is for this reason that each ministerial department was asked to identify 3 to 5 specific objectives to be achieved in the coming years in its respective area of expertise.

#### b. The Inter-ministerial Committee on gender equality

Under the Grand Ducal regulation of 31 March 1996 establishing an Inter-ministerial Committee on gender equality, this Committee is the platform for interaction on gender issues between the ministry responsible for equal opportunity and the other ministries.

Given its composition, the Committee is designed to serve as a platform for monitoring the governmental implementation of policies on gender equality, and more particularly the new Equality Plan 2015-2018.

All the ministries and departments are represented in the Committee, and the members should act as correspondents between their competent ministry and the MEGA for the equality policies.

In the past, the Committee has not been able to fulfil this duty to the best of its ability as the following was occurring:

- The members of the IC who are in a position to make decisions in their competent ministry

report excessive workload, partly due to multiple mandates in the matter<sup>1</sup>;

- Other members admittedly show interest in the subject of gender equality, but are not part of the coordination bodies of their ministries and are therefore not aware of ongoing projects that are likely to have an impact on equality.

### **c. Delegates for equal opportunities**

In 2014, over 120 equality delegates have been listed in the ministries and administrations in the public sector. They are assigned multiple tasks by the Grand Ducal regulation. These tasks require the delegates to have a mix of highly diverse skills.

Firstly, in order to fulfil their task of information and consulting, the equality delegate post requires extensive knowledge of the gender equality policy as well as the national legislation on all aspects of equal treatment and non-discrimination between women and men.

Secondly, the person in charge of the equality delegation will be the contact person in the event of professional or sexual harassment within the administration. This delicate task requires mediation, communication and conflict management skills.

- In order to best meet the requirements of equality delegates in carrying out their tasks and to train them in the “hard and soft skills” required, the MEGA organises regular training programmes reserved exclusively for the Public Service together with the Institut national d’Administration publique (National Institute of Public Administration).
- In addition to this training, the MEGA also proposes regular meetings for the equality delegates as part of a network of exchange of good practices placed in the context of the positive action programme in public service.

### **d. Gender competence cell**

According to the Grand Ducal regulation of 31 March 1996 establishing an inter-ministerial Committee on gender equality and establishing gender competence cells in the ministries, each ministry

shall contain a gender competence cell with a permanent secretariat, and the members of each cell are required to monitor the gender training programmes.

Each cell ensures the integration of the gender perspective into the actions and policies of the ministry to which it belongs, from the time these actions and policies are established. Its mission is to take stock of the situation in its ministry, analyse the policy actions taken under the gender perspective, develop a multi-year work plan for gender equality particularly highlighting the guidelines, objectives and results to be achieved.

Considering the highly ambitious goals of these cells, the duplication of certain missions with those of the Inter-ministerial Committee of the equality delegates, the lack of staff who have any expertise in this area and especially the excessive workload of the staff that often combine the mandates in the three aforementioned structures (Inter-ministerial Committee, equality delegate, a member of the gender competence cell), the gender competence cells have been introduced only sporadically since 1996 and have proven ineffective in a majority of ministries.

- Against the backdrop of simplification of structures and procedures, the MEGA will prepare a reform of the missions of the Inter-ministerial Committee and abolish the obligation to set up a gender competence cell in each ministry. Each member of the government will thus be able to choose how best to integrate the topic of equality into his work.

### **e. The impact assessment form**

The impact assessment form serves as the basis for the evaluation of any new legislation under the general principles for smart regulation and administrative simplification. In 2010, questions about gender equality were integrated into the impact assessment form to be enclosed mandatorily with every bill of the Grand Ducal regulation.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reminder: along with appointments to the Inter-ministerial Committee on gender equality, each ministry must also implement a gender competence cell and an equality delegate. The IC members must be part of the gender competence cell. The equality delegate participates as an observer.*

However, every bill that directly or indirectly pertains to women and men necessarily has an impact on them, even if the impact is not obvious at first glance. Currently, the integration of issues relating to gender equality in the impact assessment form is at a fairly advanced stage of the legislative process.

- As the reflections on a bill's expected impact on women and men should be held prior to the drafting process and in order to give each author of a bill the opportunity to indicate the results of the analysis carried out in a specific place, the impact form will be reworked to take into account issues related to gender in a more operational manner.

## 2. Equality in decision-making

The government will ensure the promotion of a balanced representation of women and men on the boards of public institutions.

The government intends to achieve 40% representation of the underrepresented sex on these boards by 2019. The government also intends to achieve 40% representation

of the underrepresented sex in the appointments within the private corporate boards that it can be part of as a shareholder.

The government will support the proposal for a European Commission directive aiming to ensure a more balanced representation of women and men on the boards of listed companies.

Moreover, concrete incentives such as positive action must be strengthened in private companies as well as in public institutions.

The government supports associations that are committed to promoting gender equality.

On 12 September, the government adopted its strategy towards a better balance between men and women in decision-making. This strategy contains the following 11 measures:

### a. In economic matters:

- Formal and transparent procedure for the appointment of members of the boards of public institutions;

- Formal and transparent procedure for the appointment of members of the boards of public companies in which the government has a stake;
- Systematic reminder of the objectives to entities outside the government which propose members in the boards of public establishments and companies in which the state holds a stake;
- Systematic and professional monitoring of the development of the situation as regards equality in the economic decision-making by the Ministry of Economy;
- Promotion of a database comprising profiles of women ready to accept a position on the board;
- Active support of the proposal for a European Commission directive relating to listed companies;
- Encouragement to companies that do not fall under any of the categories mentioned above to set concrete, voluntary and measurable targets to achieve a better balance between men and women in decision-making;
- Extension of the positive action programme;
- Networking of companies that have participated in the positive action programme.

### b. In policy matters:

- Modification of the law on the financing of political parties by introducing a link between the financing of political parties and compliance, by the latter, with the 40% quota of the underrepresented sex on the lists of candidates for legislative and European elections.
- Systematic and professional monitoring by the Ministry of State of the development of the situation as regards equality in the policy decision-making;

## 3. Equality in employment

The positive action programme has fulfilled its potential within the MEGA: after the establishment of an inventory (interrogation of the personnel in the area of equal treatment, equality in decision-making and equality in conciliation between work and family life) and based on the recommendations of an external consultant, the company has prepared an action plan to improve equality between women and men.

Recently, the MEGA have set a target to ensure that 10 private sector companies per year commit to this programme.

- The positive action programme will be further extended and a network of participating companies as well as companies interested in the programme will be implemented.

In 2010, it was decided to expand the positive action programme to the public sector. Therefore, a working group comprising officials of the Department of Equal Opportunities and the Department of Public Service has contributed to the development of the methodology and the implementation of the positive action programme in public service. Since 2011, all ministerial departments, administrations and divisions of the government have been invited annually through a circular letter to participate in the positive action programme.

In 2013 the program was extended to the communal sector.

- The state and communal public sector will continue to be informed about the positive action programme.

#### **4. Training, information and awareness**

The training programmes are a fundamental instrument of the gender equality policy and, in particular, in instigating a change in mentality.

For the MEGA, the training measures constitute one of the fundamental pillars of its work of creating awareness in the medium and long term.

Since the establishment of the Ministry in 1995, training programmes have therefore been offered to the public, either under its own management or in association with experts and external consultants including training on equal pay, or even gender training for trainers and equality delegates.

- The MEGA will organise, on request, information and training sessions on specific topics concerning gender equality.

In the context of equality between women and men, the stereotypes pertain above all to the roles traditionally assigned to men and women. Our highly media-influenced society reinforces a lot of gender stereotypes in the media, particularly video games, TV series or even advertising.

Being strongly normative messages, the stereotypes go against the change in mentality promoted for de facto equality between women and men.

- To deconstruct the stereotypes, awareness-raising campaigns on gender issues will continue to be implemented by the MEGA.

In accordance with the law of 19 June 2012 amending the law of 21 December 2007 transposing Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between women and men in the access to and the supply of goods and services, the representation of women and men in video games, songs and advertising in particular and in the media in general (newspapers, TV, radio, etc.) will be analysed and observed in order to educate the public about the consequences of an unbalanced or even discriminatory and manipulative representation and to obtain a more neutral position from a gender representation point of view (including advertisements for toys).

#### **5. Fight against domestic violence**

The fight against domestic violence is a priority file for the government and a permanently relevant issue for the MEGA, which assigns a large majority of the budget resources to various contracted service associations in the social sector who work with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

##### **a. Prevention**

Alongside the social work, prevention and awareness-raising, important initiatives need to be undertaken in the area of domestic violence.

It is for this purpose that the MEGA regularly launches information campaigns that cater to the entire agreement sector of the country while involving other players such as general practitioners. This involves opening up the subject of domestic violence through posters and brochures, in order to create awareness of the subject.



The recent “Violence hurts the whole family” campaign was, in exemplary fashion, a major success because it outlined the consequences of domestic violence for the whole family, and especially children, in a light-hearted but decisive manner. It goes without saying that efforts to fight domestic violence must be pursued in close cooperation between the competent ministry and the participants in the field.

It was an important step to go beyond traditional campaigns to target awareness-raising efforts. This led to the recognition that foreign communities are significantly affected by domestic violence. Seeking dialogue with such communities is essential; for example, this was done with the Portuguese-speaking community by creating a theatre project featuring the subject of domestic violence.

- These evenings have been a great success and discussions have started on the extension of this project to other communities.

The information brochures were translated into several languages, including English, Portuguese and Serbo-Croatian, to more effectively reach out to foreigners living in our country.

Sex education and counselling are key elements of an effective prevention policy in the area of sexual violence. The use of violence among couples, which often includes sexual violence, is often rooted in childhood. Early transmission of values through sex education and counselling, which are based primarily on equality between the sexes, can help break the power imbalance in couples and thus lead to a reduction in domestic violence.

- Emphasis will be placed on the training component for personnel in the social sector by integrating the persons exposed to cases of domestic violence, in this case, the medical staff and doctors. There is a real need for training in order to better recognise and detect domestic violence.

#### **b. Protection of victims and accountability of perpetrators**

The amended law of 8 September 2003 on domestic violence amending:

1. The law of 31 May 1999 on the police and the general inspection by the police;
2. The Criminal Code;

3. The Code of Criminal Procedure;
4. The new Code of Civil Procedure, which provides for an administrative police measure lasting 14 days, which allows the police to expel from his or her home any person who threatens another close/related person with whom he or she lives. It is the responsibility of the police to take this measure, upon the authorisation of the State prosecutor, if there is serious, precise and conclusive evidence that a person is about to commit an offence against the life or physical integrity of their spouse or common law husband/wife, an antecedent or descendant or an antecedent or descendant of their spouse or common law husband/wife.

The expulsion of the perpetrator of domestic violence from their house aims to achieve the following objectives: the immediate prevention of domestic violence in acute situations, the protection of victims, the accountability of perpetrators of violence, particularly in view of long-term prevention and awareness-raising at the corporate level of the gravity, and the specificity of domestic violence.

The MEGA has an agreement with a number of active service associations for providing assistance to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. These include the Fondation Maison de la Porte ouverte, Femmes en détresse a.s.b.l., the Fondation ProFamilia and the Conseil National des Femmes-Foyer Sud.

Beyond these service associations, other structures such as Caritas Accueil et Solidarité (CAS) of the Caritas Confederation, the Foyer Ulysse, the Foyer Abrisud, the Comité National de Défense Sociale (CNDS) [National Committee of Social Defence], the Victims Assistance Service of the Prosecutor's Office, and the Legal Information Service of the Luxembourg Prosecution Office provide concrete assistance for victims of domestic violence.

Beyond assistance for victims, the MEGA has an agreement with the Riicht Eraus service of the Red Cross, which is a consulting and support service for perpetrators of violence. The objective of the service is to reduce domestic violence by working with the perpetrator/s.

#### **c. Partnership**

The MEGA presides over the Committee for cooperation between the professionals in the field of the fight against violence, which meets regularly to closely monitor progress in the fight against domestic violence.

This primarily concerns all types of cooperation between all those directly involved, such as the Grand Ducal police, the judicial authorities and the social services. In addition, the Committee is responsible for collecting and analysing the annual statistics and making concrete recommendations to the government as part of an annual report.

- Effective policies need to be implemented on top of an assessment of the present situation and a detailed analysis of the circumstances. That is why the government has put the Public Research Centre (PRC) for Health in charge of a detailed study on the phenomenon of domestic violence in Luxembourg. The results of the three components of the study (victims, perpetrators, professionals) will be presented and discussed during a public conference in March 2015. The study is meant to set priorities for the information, awareness and prevention policy in future.

## 6. Prostitution

As part of a joint meeting on 6 November 2014 of the parliamentary Committees for Health, Equal Opportunities and Justice, the ministers of for Equal Opportunity and Justice, Lydia Mutsch and Felix Braz, presented the outline of the government's approach to prostitution in Luxembourg. This approach is based on the interim report of the "Prostitution" platform, which brings together representatives of the Ministries of Equal Opportunities and Justice, the judicial police, the Public Prosecutor, the "HIV Berodung" and "DropIn" and the social intervention service of the city of Luxembourg which discussed various topics related to prostitution.

### a. To enable prostitutes to leave prostitution

In cooperation with "DropIn" of the Luxembourg Red Cross and the Agence pour le développement de l'Emploi (ADEM), the MEGA will first develop a strategy called "EXIT" to enable prostitutes to leave their environment by benefiting from psychosocial support during this difficult process.

The prostitutes require conditions that enable them to stabilise their situation, especially as regards housing and employment. The Luxembourg Red Cross has declared that it is ready to provide two studio flats. The ADEM has proposed to integrate the potential candidate(s) into social programmes that also offer training.

### b. To emphasise sex education and counselling

The government intends to place special emphasis on sex education in our schools. For this reason, the work led by the Ministry of Health related to the National Action Plan on sex education and counselling will be accelerated. In the context of prostitution, sex education can help adolescents develop a sexual ethic that is based on the values of respect and mutual responsibility in relationships. Moreover, sex education must inform students about the dangers of sexually transmitted infections.

### c. To strengthen cooperation in the fight against procurement and human trafficking

The government aims to improve cooperation between the competent authorities in the fight against procurement and human trafficking.

Training for identifying victims of human trafficking more effectively, especially for police officers and the personnel of social services, is extremely crucial. The fight against human trafficking is coordinated by an inter-ministerial Committee on "Trafficking", which will launch information and awareness campaigns.

### d. Only a Luxembourg model can be adapted to the prostitution situation in Luxembourg

Regarding the legal framework, the government is closely following the discussions currently underway in France and Germany, two countries that intend to change their laws on prostitution. These changes may also affect the Grand Duchy.

Special attention is given to the various legislative models applied in the world, where we must distinguish between three models. The prohibitionist regime penalises all activities relating to prostitution.

The abolitionist regime aims to abolish prostitution in the medium term. The prostitute(s) are considered victims and are not penalised. Human trafficking for sexual exploitation, procurement or the establishment of brothels is, however, not allowed.

The regulationist regime tolerates prostitution as a necessary evil and puts it under state control.

Their laws of these regimes state the conditions for the authorisation of establishments (brothels, EROS-Center) as well as the liability for taxes, registration or regular health checks.

Further progress cannot be made on the legislative front until the government receives the results of the consultation debate to be held in 2015 in the House of Representatives based on the preliminary work of the "Prostitution" platform.

### **III. Policy priorities of other ministries in the area of gender equality**

#### **1. Ministry of State**

The Ministry of State is a ministry with transversal competence. Thus, the implementation of specific objectives in the area of gender equality can be applicable only to the general public policy. Nevertheless, certain paths to ensure greater equality between women and men are under consideration:

- To establish statistics disaggregated by gender in the area of representation of women in public decision-making bodies;
- To promote the appointment of more women in decision-making bodies of the State and public institutions;
- In terms of party funding, to propose a method of financing that takes into account a more balanced proportion of both sexes on the lists of election candidates.

#### ***Department of Media and Communications***

The Department of Media and Communications has identified the following objectives:

- To prepare information or promotional brochures whose texts reflect the gender perspective;
- In the future, 90% of all jobs will require digital skills. However, a very large majority of girls and women are excluded from the technical community. Therefore, the Department of Media and Communications continually supports initiatives that encourage girls and women

to build their confidence and be better represented in the fields of information and communication technologies (Rails Girls Luxembourg, awareness-raising campaigns at student fairs, etc.).

#### **2. Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs**

For the 2014-2019 legislative period, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs has set the following specific objectives to be achieved in the area of gender equality:

- To improve the rate of representation of women (currently 30%) within the diplomatic corps during the current legislative period;
- To propose ways to support the partners of officials stationed abroad in their search for employment in the country of assignment of the official;
- To initiate discussions with the Ministries of Social Security and Public Service to develop formulas to support voluntary pension insurance for the partners of officials stationed abroad when they lose their mandatory insurance coverage due to unpaid leave or a resignation from their job owing to departure abroad with their spouse.

#### ***Development cooperation directorate***

In 2012, the development cooperation directorate developed a "gender" strategy that constitutes a guidance document allowing those involved in this

cooperation to integrate the gender perspective, gender equality and women's empowerment into the design and implementation of projects and programmes.

Future challenges include the three strategic axes adopted by the development cooperation directorate: gender mainstreaming, specific interventions and normative work.

- The first strategic axis specifically provides for the integration and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women at different levels of the Luxembourg cooperation programme. This gender mainstreaming approach consists of systematically taking into consideration the conditions, priorities and needs of women and men in all interventions at the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. Its aim is to ensure that men and women benefit equally and to eliminate inequality.
- In this regard, the development cooperation directorate will continue, inter alia, to train the personnel of the Luxembourg cooperation programme in the area of gender and development, take into account the gender perspective in policy dialogue or integrate it into the strategic tools of the Luxembourg cooperation programme.
- The strategic axis relating to the specific interventions aims at achieving gender equality and women's empowerment by making changes to institutional practices and social relations. The Luxembourg cooperation programme will continue to support the international organisations active on the "gender" front and encourage more projects and awareness-raising campaigns in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The purpose of the strategic axis on normative work is to ensure the introduction of elements of equal opportunity between women and men in the formulation of Luxembourg policies during the works of the major international institutions and organisations. The cooperation directorate actively supports "gender mainstreaming" and therefore intends to closely cooperate with its bilateral and multilateral partners.

### 3. Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture ensures, as far as possible and to the best of their ability, the integration of initiatives for gender equality in its policy management. Some measures have already been implemented, while others remain to be implemented:

- Ensuring equal representation of women and men in internal decision-making bodies of the Ministry of Culture;
- Promotion of equal representation of women and men within the external management bodies (public institutions, agreement sector, etc.) under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture through its representative in the said boards;
- Ensuring the scheduling of a breakdown by gender of cultural statistics commissioned/drafted by the Ministry of Culture;
- Maintaining and secure good internal working conditions within the Ministry of Culture following the results of the satisfaction survey in which the Ministry of Culture participated in 2013;
- Ensuring equal treatment of candidacies by a representative of the Ministry of Culture as regards integrated selection procedures/Committees (artist centres, contests, exhibitions, etc.) with, in the event of equal artistic quality, positive discrimination in favour of the under-represented sex.

### 4. Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure

#### a. Department of Transport

Today, there is less and less division of family responsibilities according to traditional roles, since both spouses often want to lead an active professional life. Moreover, the number of separated parents (with one or more dependent children) is constantly increasing. Therefore, the needs of women and men in matters of public transport are becoming less distinguishable.

In order to enable both men and women to reconcile work and family life, the Department of Transport intends to ensure that the options in terms of public transport are sufficiently broad and optimised so as to cover all conveyance to be carried out in normal time (between workplaces, crèches, schools, children activity centres, etc.)

## b. Department of Public Works

Through the following measures, the Authority for Roads and Bridges (APC) intends to encourage women to pursue atypical activities in order to increase the number of women employed in technical positions:

- Awareness-raising activities such as participation in “Girls’ Day/Boys’ Day”;
- Integration of the gender perspective into the facilities provided for staff as part of their work (e.g. on construction sites);
- Integration of the gender perspective into the design and renovation of State facilities dedicated to the technical personnel of the APC;
- High flexibility as regards part-time service requests towards both men and women.

The Public Works Authority (ABP) intends to maintain gender diversity among its members: the recruitment is done in a centralised manner and the selection of candidates is carried out based on skills.

At present, women are represented in all careers.

The ABP has set a guideline to use all legal means at its disposal to promote a balance between professional life and family life at the workplace. As an example, it must be noted that parental leave requests for male employees have increased in recent years.

- The ABP intends to continue this policy.

## 5. Ministry of Economy

- The Ministry of Economy will continue to support networks and associations acting in favour of female entrepreneurship. A one-time financial support for the various actions carried out by these networks will be analysed on a case-by-case basis.
- The vast majority of instruments supporting entrepreneurship (Business Mentoring,<sup>123</sup> Go/123, Go-Social, etc.) are based on individual support to project coordinators which takes into account their gender as well as a range of other socio-economic aspects such as level of

training, family situation, financial resources and professional experience.

- The Department of Economy will also continue to grant incentive awards, such as the “Woman Business Manager of the Year”, to female entrepreneurs in business.
- The Ministry of Economy could in the future (and retroactively until 2011) provide statistics on the granting of authorisation of establishment, broken down by gender. The Ministry co-finances Luxembourg’s participation in the “Global Entrepreneurship Monitor” study which may provide a basis for analysing the differences between men’s and women’s attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
- A study on the advantages and disadvantages of self-employment relative to paid employment is being conducted on behalf of the Ministry of Economy. This will include ensuring equal social rights for people who are self-employed and those who have paid employment. The objective is not, however, to copy all the provisions that benefit employees, but to provide a form of self-employment that has been adapted to the lifestyle choices of those involved.
- Finally, the reconciliation of professional life with family life has an important place in the 4th Action Plan for SMEs, given that Luxembourg still has underutilised potential in terms of its female participation rate, which must be mobilised to address the issue of labour shortage in a growing number of sectors.
- In general, the most promising instruments are outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Economy and are probably found among the daily “facilitators” (for example, an increase in child-care centres close to the parents’ workplace), which enables women to continue their careers despite having chosen to raise a family. Such a measure would be of equal benefit to women who are employees and those who are self-employed.

## 6. Ministry of Education, Children and Youth

At present, the Ministry co-organises the “Girls’ Day/Boys’ Day” initiative, establishes gender statistics and participates in the inter-ministerial working group to develop a national strategy as regards sex education and counselling.

### a. At the administrative level, the following objectives have been set for the future:

- To provide for the appointment of a male person in the MEGA’s Inter-ministerial Committee on Gender, in order to achieve gender equality. The MENJE has always been represented by women.
- Equal representation between men and women is sought within the delegation of the MENJE personnel.

### b. Objectives at school level

The national and international statistics show a positive trend in relation to the progress of girls in education.

In Luxembourg, the graduate school report for 2012-2013<sup>2</sup> shows that 53.8% of students are girls and 46.2% are boys and that the admission rate for girls is higher than boys at this level of education. In general, the number of young girls has increased compared to their male counterparts.

However, the disparities in school results between the sexes persist and it is important to undertake targeted measures to address specific shortcomings of each sex. The development towards parity will thus remain paramount.

- At an international level, in all the countries participating in the PISA survey, 15-year-old girls outperform boys of the same age in written comprehension. Additionally, young people - especially young people from Luxembourg - read too little. It is therefore important to implement activities intended to promote reading and reading comprehension in girls as well as boys. This is currently being done in several schools for an educational scheme lasting 3 years, notably in the Lycée Josy Barthel in Mamer (LJBM).

- Another PISA finding is that in most countries, boys outperform girls in mathematics. This often results in the student pursuing the technological sciences, particularly engineering sciences, and a preference for fields oriented towards electronic, mechanical or computer studies.

- In order to address this discrepancy, it is important to promote the “rails girls” training in Luxembourg high schools. Rails girls (see [www.rails-girls.com](http://www.rails-girls.com)) is a Finnish initiative that originated in Helsinki in 2010, and provides girls and women with the necessary IT knowledge to develop and spread their ideas on the Internet, through the programming language Ruby. In addition to the transmission of technical knowledge, the initiative also aims to motivate girls and women to contribute to the development of information technologies and to develop their interest and enthusiasm for this field, which is dominated by men.

- It is possible to broaden the purpose of the Girls’ Day and Boys’ Day by establishing a national day of equality between girls and boys which aims to encourage an exchange of good practices in order to promote educational guidance as well as professional choices based on the intellectual abilities, talents and interests of the person. This would involve providing young people with knowledge about gender equality more interactively, in cooperation with partner ministries and possibly the professional chambers (to be planned in the form of fairs, conference series, workshops or other methods).

### c. Other ways forward

- To motivate girls towards professional independence, entrepreneurship, particularly in e-commerce (instruments of choice: mini-companies, Genial, etc.);
- To implement a mentoring system, facilitate access to specific training or fields by being assisted by a classmate of the other sex.
- The government will examine the possibility of developing the Service Krank Kanner Doheem model as a tool for parents to work in case their child is ill.

## 7. Ministry of Higher Education and Research

The Ministry of Higher Education and Research has tried for a number of years to achieve a better balance as regards equality between men and women in terms of appointments and renewals of appointments of the members of various boards under its supervision.

- The law of 3 December 2014, which focuses on the organisation of public research centres and the CEPS, states that “the proportion of the members of each sex in the Board may not be less than forty percent”. The institutions involved in these proposals are LIH-Luxembourg Institute of Health (formerly CRP-Santé, also combining IBBL-Integrated Biobank Luxembourg), LIST-Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (merger of CRP-Gabriel Lippmann and CRP-Henri Tudor) and LISER-Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (formerly CEPS).

The Ministry of Higher Education and Research will continue to apply this approach and recommend it to institutions that are not directly affected by the aforementioned bill.

- As regards the establishment of the Equality Plan 2015-2018 in the law relating to CRPs and CEPS, the Ministry of Higher Education and Research specified in the 2014-2017 agreement with public research centres that, apart from the inclusion of 40% of the underrepresented sex on the Boards, the CRP must ensure a fair balance in gender representation in the management of its personnel, particularly with regard to senior executives (executive Committee, directors of departments and heads of units).
- The institutional agreement with the University of Luxembourg stipulates that “in the management of its personnel, the University must ensure a fair balance in gender representation, particularly in terms of the careers of teachers”. At the end of said agreements with the State, the institutions are required to submit a report on the implementation of the agreement to the Minister of Higher Education and Research.

In addition, the Ministry of Higher Education and Research conducted a complete renewal of the Commission nationale d'éthique (National Ethics Commission), which now includes nine women, five men and a transgender man.

## Other ways forward

The Ministry of Higher Education and Research will assess the need to develop a “Gender Action Plan” for public research, with the particular aim of addressing the “leaky pipeline” issue and the “glass ceiling” effect while considering the decreasing number of women as they progress in their scientific and academic research careers.

## 8. Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration, and the Greater Region

As part of the revision of the law on guaranteed minimum income (GMI), the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region/Solidarity Division sponsored the following studies for the General Inspectorate of Social Security (IGSS):

- The analysis of the life trajectory of the beneficiaries (f/m) of the guaranteed minimum income (GMI) (April 2013);
- A report on the current situation of the beneficiaries of the guaranteed minimum income (April 2013);
- An impact analysis of the measurements pertaining to the population concerned, including single-parent families (analysis in process).

The Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region/Solidarity Division gradually introduced a breakdown by gender of the users in the following areas:

- Administrative statistics concerning the guaranteed minimum income (GMI) (see e.g. Annual report - SNAS [Service for Social Action]);
- Statistics of social offices and services contracted for adults (refer to Annual Report of the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region/Solidarity Division);
- As part of the objective of “promoting social inclusion by reducing poverty” of the Europe Strategy 2020, the risk indicator for poverty and social exclusion will be broken down by gender for the National Reform Programme (NRP) 2015.

Since 2012, the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region has taken the initiative of carrying out a survey of the houses available in the various accommodation facilities for adults

under the supervision of the Ministry of Family Affairs and Integration, the Ministry of Health, the MEGA, the city of Luxembourg and two social offices. The survey also provides information on the number of people - men, women and children - living in the facilities.

- As part of the fight against poverty and social exclusion laid out in the Europe Strategy 2020, from 2015 the IGSS will carry out an analysis of the effects of the introduction of childcare services and the reform of social offices pertaining to the fight against poverty. This will be done for the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region and the Ministry of National Education, Children and Youth,
- As part of the implementation of the European food aid programme for the most deprived people (FEAD), the statistics of social groceries will be broken down by gender as of 2015.
- In a crisis situation (such as divorce or loss of employment), the proper functioning of the specific consulting, support and continuing education services, as well as that of shelters for men, women and children, is indispensable.

An analysis of the requirement, supply and demand and an assessment of the existing services will be carried out in order to create synergy.

#### **For combining work and family life**

- Awareness-raising projects will encourage fathers to take more parental leave and will also involve the companies.
- The government will encourage the creation of training opportunities for prospective parents. More generally, a national program will be developed to motivate managers to encourage any concrete measures that help to combine work and family life.
- Current leave for family reasons will be evaluated and, if necessary, harmonised.

### **9. Ministry of Finance**

The Ministry of Finance, through the fiscal policy, will ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to ministerial departments to enable them to implement the general public policy pertaining to gender equality.

In addition to the general objectives that the government has set for the Ministry of Finance and its administrations, the following specific objectives have been set:

- Setting down a fair recruitment policy for men and women within the Ministry of Finance and its administrations;
- Setting down a policy of fair progress for men and women in the Ministry of Finance and its administrations (two of the four directorates of the Ministry of Finance have been headed by women since May 2014);
- To ensure equal treatment of taxpayers, regardless of gender, with regard to tax provisions.

### **10. Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform**

#### **a. Reforms to the Civil Service**

The provisions of the amended Law of 16 April 1979 determining the general status of civil servants as well as a whole set of laws and regulations for enforcement contribute, through multiple actions relating to equal opportunity, to a better work-life balance for all public officials.

Equal rights, guaranteed by the status of civil servant, are currently reinforced by three very concrete measures of the reforms package concerning wage and statutory matters intended to combat inequality between women and men which may result from failure to take into account the peculiarities of working conditions and specific constraints related to the balance between personal and professional life.

- The first of these measures is applicable to division or department heads who are currently excluded from entitlement to leave for part-time work or part-time service. Under the new scope proposed for Article 31, paragraph 2, subparagraph 2 and Article 31.1, paragraph 2, b) of the general status, the officials assuming the leadership of a division or a department would no longer be covered by the above exclusions.



- The newly proposed Article 19ter of the general status introduces the possibility of providing public officials, under certain conditions, with an exemption from service so that they are able to enrol in a study course that could lead to an additional qualification. This measure is intended to enable the officials concerned to pass the study courses that they have undertaken during working hours while being paid for the service provided by them. This may constitute up to 20% of their duties. Note that the exemption may be granted indiscriminately to full-time officials as well as those occupying a part-time position and those benefiting from leave for part-time work.
- Finally, the third proposed measure takes into account the new modes of organisation of family life, marked by a considerable increase in the number of single-parent families and a rise in blended families. Thus, it is proposed that the family allowance stipulated in the texts be allocated as a single amount of twenty-seven index points regardless of the level of treatment, related to the actual cost for one or more children. In addition, two people who have one or more dependent children together will each be entitled to the family allowance for as long as they have dependent children.

#### **b. Training**

One of the fundamental tasks of the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP) is to promote vocational training in the State and communes, with the dual aim of optimising the internal functioning of the public administration and improving external communication. In this context, the INAP has established a concept to help integrate the gender perspective into policies through training.

The purpose of the concept is to strengthen the skills of each gender by anchoring the gender perspective in the structures of the INAP and integrating it into all initial and ongoing training offered to the employees of the State and communes.

Apart from the continuing education programme, the INAP systematically organises mandatory training in equal opportunities for trainees in the administrative, scientific, technical, socio-educational and paramedical sectors.

Insofar as training for the judicial staff, police and penitentiary institutions is not covered by the general training provided by the INAP during the internship, discussions are to be carried out for the introduction of a compulsory equivalent training programme by the ministerial departments in charge of these institutions (Ministry for Internal Security, Ministry of Justice).

#### **c. Positive actions**

In 2011, the APE and the INAP each launched an affirmative action project in their structure. This participation in the positive action programme shows how the ministerial department for public service is committed to a good ratio of males to females within its units and supports measures that encourage equal treatment for women and men in the development of their professional careers as well as measures that help improve the work-life balance of its officials.

#### **d. Equality delegates**

By circular letter dated 8 March 2012, the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform has invited 175 administrative entities to appoint an equality delegate respectively to renew the mandate of their delegate, which is about to end.

As part of wage and statutory reforms, a proposed Grand Ducal regulation, which has been developed in collaboration with your department, provides for the modification of the Grand Ducal regulation of 5 March 2004 laying down the appointment terms, the rights and duties of the delegates for equality between women and men within the ministerial departments and administrations towards a transfer of the coordination of actions in the field of gender equality from the Minister of Public Service to the Minister of Equal Opportunities; it also provides for drafting adjustments.

#### **e. Planned measures**

Finally, it is to be noted that since 2007, in its annual activity report, the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform has published statistics relating to the enrolment of State officials broken down by gender.

The following measures can be considered in the future:

- To establish an inventory of public officials with part-time responsibilities;

- To establish an inventory of the proportion of women in management positions;
- To review the representation by gender of the officials in different age groups;
- To evaluate mandatory gender training during the internship and the continuous gender training provided by the INAP;
- To increase awareness of equal opportunities among authors of a bill of the Grand Ducal Regulation within the MFPPRA;
- To intensify efforts to extend the positive action programme to the public sector and consolidate the collaborative efforts between our two ministerial departments as part of the concrete work to be done with regard to the equality delegate network;
- To support the awareness-raising initiatives of the MEGA and promote a change in attitudes and behaviour in a concrete, construction and participatory manner.

## 11. Ministry of Home Affairs

The government will intensify cooperation with communes on the policy of equality between women and men. On the basis of an evaluation, the charter for equality, which empowers the communes, will be renewed.

The communes are significant players in the equality policy because:

- They are very close to their people - women and men - and they know their requirements,
- It is thus possible for them to apply the principle of “Gender Mainstreaming” in a concrete and direct manner
- Their competences affect all areas of life, from the transition centre to the nursing home,
- The communes are providers of many services,
- As employers, they are concerned with the “Equality in Employment” component.

As regards its internal organisation, the Ministry of Home Affairs will implement a series of measures to promote the equal treatment of women and men, particularly when it comes to work-life balance.

- Equal access to all employment positions for women and men by increasing the number of women in senior and management positions; this is done by establishing recruitment plans to increase the proportion of women at the recruitment stage;
- Balanced representation between male and female membership of boards and commissions by replacing an outgoing member with a representative of the underrepresented sex;
- Prevention of discrimination in the workplace, particularly by training all staff on gender equality in the INAP organisation;
- Work organisation and staff management that is favourable for creating a work-life balance via the introduction of flexibility into the flexitime and an accommodating attitude which enables parents to work flexible hours in the event of the illness of a child.

## 12. Ministry of Justice

At the Ministry of Justice itself, the majority of employees are women, with regard to both the management staff as well as the senior civil servants and the entire ministry staff.

As most of the representatives within the entities of the bodies under the Ministry of Justice are recommended, either by other ministers or by other public or private stakeholders, it is difficult fully manage the process to ensure better representation of the underrepresented sex.

- The Ministry of Justice, however, will set out during the renewal of mandates to raise awareness on s the need to change the situation among public and private members of the various economic interest group.

In some instances, such as the economic group RCSL (Trade and Companies Register), the situation has largely evolved while the management board, which originally comprised only men, shall ensure that one third of the board is comprised of women from the next general meeting.

In the field of Justice, the judiciary already predominantly comprises women at all the levels of court.

- As part of the future development of new IT tools that help to establish judicial statistics, it is planned to have figures showing the information separately by gender.

Other professions such as those of the bailiff and the notary are improving. The process, however, is a gradual process dependent on the ongoing change in people who may apply for these positions, even though the appointments are made based on seniority.

- The government will call for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention, known as the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women (forced marriages, honour killings, genital mutilations) and will encourage a multidisciplinary policy against human trafficking.
- Any form of human trafficking will be combated by the appropriate means: legislation, information campaigns, assistance to victims, European cooperation against organised crime networks.

### 13. Ministry of Housing

The policy adopted by the Ministry of Housing aims to enable as many citizens as possible to get access to decent housing at affordable prices.

Committed to prioritising support to the poorest households, the Ministry has over time implemented a range of initiatives to help them, including individual housing assistance.

These measures ensure equal treatment for women and men in the sense that only criteria related to the income situation, household composition (single-member, single-parent family, couple with or without children, etc.), occupancy status (owner or tenant) and housing (size, sanitary condition, etc.) are taken into account.

The Ministry will analyse the possibilities of breaking down by gender the published data on the housing situation of Luxembourg residents.

Finally, a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making bodies is ensured. For example, it is appropriate to cite the Fund Steering Committee for Housing Development which comprises 4 women and 8 men, whereas all the positions were occupied only by men a year and a half ago.

### 14. Ministry of Health

- The statistics provided by the Ministry of Health, which continuously pertain to a wide range of health data, are characterised by a specific analysis and by gender and age of the health data. These systematic analyses are also an integral part of any health evaluation.
- The Ministry of Health constantly undertakes various programmes promoting health and prevention (fight against tobacco, prevention of diabetes, cardio-vascular accidents) while taking into account differences in lifestyles between men and women particularly with regard to the different use of health care and the physiological differences for the occurrence of certain diseases. Certain programmes, however, specifically address a particular gender (mammography program, HPV programme, contraception programme, etc.).
- In some programmes, such as the national programme for emotional and sexual health, gender aspects are regarded to be the main threads since they need to be considered in every aspect of the programme.
- In terms of equality in access to care, which is a major concern of the Ministry of Health, all the aspects, including gender differences that may influence this factor, are taken into account. Nevertheless, socio-economic considerations may also be factors in growing influence on differences in the health condition of the population.
- The government will set up a support service for victims of violence in partnership with the National Health Laboratory (forensic medicine department) and the hospital sector (“Opferambulanz”).
- The sex education and counselling programmes should be based on equality and mutual respect between women and men.

## 15. Ministry of Social Security

As regards social security, the statistics have been following for decades the principle of breakdown by gender, which also helps to get a lot of information about the inequalities both in working life and elsewhere.

There are two paths to follow in order to eliminate unequal treatment in the field of social security in the government programme:

### a. Pension insurance:

- Analysis of the possibilities of individualisation of pension rights;
- Raising awareness among women to engage in an occupational activity or maintain individualised insurance career: in this context, it is planned to republish the brochure prepared for this purpose in 2013.

### b. Creating a balance between professional life and family life:

- Analysis of legal or regulatory provisions relating to parental leave, child-raising allowance etc. from the point of view of gender equality.

An extra path not yet taken, but which had been part of the equality plans in the past, would consist of an analysis of the preventive medicine programmes from the point of view of equal opportunities and the role of health agencies in this regard.

## 16. Ministry of Sport

As part of a study *“Gesundheit, motorische Leistungsfähigkeit und körperlich-sportliche Aktivität von Kindern und Jugendlichen in Luxemburg”*, published in 2006 by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and thus the ministerial department for Sport, it turned out that both physical condition and level of physical activity or physical commitment (in leisure time or in sport clubs):

- Decrease with age between 9 and 18 years;
- Decrease with training courses taken by young people, the lowest level of training courses being those where physical activity is less frequent and less intense;

- Are significantly less frequent and less intense in girls compared to boys, especially in the lowest level of training courses.

Following these findings and a second study in 2010, the latter being longitudinal, confirming the trends observed in 2006, a number of measures were proposed in the National Action Plan *“Gesond iessen, méi bewegen”*, which includes 144 measures combined in six different areas of interest.

Area of interest 3, which is titled “To motivate and raise awareness among young boys and girls towards physical activities and sports”, revolves around the idea of promoting sport and physical activity for young people beyond the primary schooling and also beyond compulsory education, for the simple reason that young people in these age groups are more likely to abandon a physical activity and sport and may slip into inactive lifestyles which are harmful to their health.

Given that the main concern is to make special efforts on behalf of girls unresponsive to physical and sports activities, a number of measures are undertaken specifically for them:

- Implementation of a campaign aiming at increased participation of young people, particularly girls, in physical and sports activities and execution of the following:
  - › establish an inventory of activities and initiatives in the “youth” sector;
  - › establish an inventory of the competences of youth workers in the youth sector as regards physical activity;
  - › establish an inventory of the infrastructure that can be used for informal sports;
  - › use the meeting and exchange structures of youth sector to centralise and list examples of intervention;
  - › aim for concerted actions with other stakeholders to deliver a coherent message and encourage young people, especially young girls, to get associated with sports clubs;
  - › provide youth workers in the youth sector with certain conceptual and logistical support;

- › under the Youth Pact, chalk out future plans for young people at the local level with projects and initiatives that have been successful, including formulas that involve multiple partnerships.
- Possible preventive intervention in the formal and informal education process of young girls: implementation concepts aimed at encouraging girls to engage in regular physical activity from an early age:
  - › introduce in the initial and continuing training of teachers and youth workers the notions of coeducation and pedagogical concepts that meet the specific requirements of students of both sexes;
  - › develop pedagogical projects and teaching modules for defined target groups at school and in the care facilities;
  - › in sports clubs, detect weaknesses in organised sport as regards the girls' loyalty, develop and implement a concept of prevention and remediation.

The implementation of the 144 measures outlined in the National Action Plan "Gesond iessen, méi bewegen" follows a logic of priorities, feasibility and available resources. The measures indicated above will probably be addressed in the second half of the legislative period 2013-2018.

#### **17. Ministry of Labour, Employment, and the Social and Solidarity Economy**

- The government is committed to fighting stereotypes and prejudices with regard to vocational guidance.

To achieve this objective, awareness-raising and continuous training projects in matters of gender policy particularly aimed at the professionals concerned are highly essential.

- An information campaign will educate companies about the provisions of the Labour Code for the recruitment of persons of the underrepresented sex;
- The Government welcomes the draft law No. 6611 on equal pay for men and women. After wide consultation with all stakeholders, the government will prepare a bill for the implementation of the principle of gender equality in the professional environment;
- The introduction of time accounts will enable greater flexibility in managing working time both for companies and employees, particularly with regard to continuous education and a balance between work and family life. The opinion of the Economic and Social Council of 23 July 2004, in view of the introduction of time accounts for employees under private law contracts and officials with public status, will serve as basis for the development of a new bill;
- This will involve better supervision of the working exemptions in the context of pregnancy in order to avoid exclusions that may be detrimental to women's careers;
- Projects for professional reorientation or reintegration of women, particularly single mothers, will be developed as part of the existing initiatives in order to prevent them from slipping into precarious situations, or even poverty.

## **IV. Monitoring the implementation of this action plan**

Each minister is responsible for the implementation of measures for which he or she is functionally competent.

The MEGA will coordinate the work through the Interministerial Committee for gender equality.

Interim reports for implementation will be sent annually to the Governing Council. Notes







LE GOUVERNEMENT  
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG  
Ministère de l'Égalité des chances

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