

HELLENIC MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF  
GENDER EQUALITY

DEPARTMENT OF EUROPEAN AND  
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**A. National Action Plan on Gender Equality-Enhancement of rights of women and girls.**

Greece's main priorities in the field of gender equality are reflected in the new National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020 (NAPGE), prepared by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality/Ministry of Interior (GSGE) in cooperation with other public bodies, academia and civil society and aligned with the priorities of the European Union and United Nations on Gender

Equality. The NAPGE was drafted after consultation with women and men on equality issues, representatives of civil society, academia, and public administration.

The NAPGE is of national scope and the strategic objectives set for the new period 2016-2020 are as follows:

1. Social inclusion and equal treatment of women facing multiple discrimination.

Objectives:

- i) Integrating a gender perspective into legislation and public policies for vulnerable social groups.
- ii) Strengthening of the GSGE in designing targeted policies for women who suffer multiple discrimination and enhance the collection and diffusion of gender disaggregated data.
- iii) Ensure equality and non-discrimination for women who suffer multiple discrimination.

2. Combating violence against women.

Objectives:

- i) Implementation and review of the existing legislation.
- ii) Holistic and multi-sectoral support of women who are victims of gender violence and / or multiple discrimination (eg immigrants, refugees, women with disabilities, Roma, single mothers, etc.)
- iii) Awareness among the overall population and networking development.
- iv) Monitoring of gender violence.
- v) Coordination and evaluation of the implemented NAPGE 2016-2020 policies.

3. Labour market, work-family reconciliation.

Objectives:

- i) Encourage female labour market participation.
- ii) Promoting the principle of equality in enterprises.
- iii) Promotion of female entrepreneurship -social and solidarity economy.
- iv) Improving the status of women in the agricultural sector.
- v) Encouraging the use of ICTs by women.
- vi) Reconciliation of work and family life.
- vii) Collection and provision of data on gender differences in the labour market outcomes.

4. Education, training, media, culture, sports.

Objectives:

- i) Promoting gender equality in formal education, science and research.
- ii) Promoting Gender Equality in Lifelong Learning and Informal Education.
- iii) Promoting Equality through Media.
- iv) Promote gender equality in cultural creation.
- v) Promoting gender equality in sports.

## 5.Health.

Objectives:

- i) Integration of a gender perspective in Health care policies.
- ii) Eliminate gender stereotypes in Health and Health Services.
- iii) Health Issues for special population groups.

## 6.Equal participation of women in decision-making positions

Objectives:

- i) Accelerating the equal participation of women in all areas of public and professional life, particularly in decision-making positions in parliament and in local / regional government.
- ii) Eliminate discrimination against women and ensuring gender equality in political and public life.
- iii) Policies for the balanced participation of women in elections.
- iv) Strengthening and developing the capacity and skills of women to actively participate in processes and decision-making and in leadership positions.

The NAPGE includes a variety of horizontal interventions in public policy and vertical specialized policies aimed at women and men in areas where inequalities are identified.

Data collection and impact assessments are foreseen during the implementation of all the objectives, through the Observatory (see below).

Furthermore, constant cooperation and synergies are required with other Ministries and relevant stakeholders. In this regard, gender is taken into account to all ministries policies.

### **B. Actions to address the needs of women and girls facing multiple discrimination.**

1. In the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020 there is a clear reference to the economic crisis affecting some EU countries, including Greece and consequently to the austerity and fiscal adjustment policies applied, thus exacerbating the risk of multiple discrimination against women. In Greece, the gender impact of the economic crisis is closely linked to cuts in the public sector, difficulties in reconciliation of family and working life, rising of precarious work, and deregulation of labor relations. The multidimensional nature of women's poverty makes it imperative to manage and resolve wider economic and social life parameters than those directly related to the labor market. Particular attention and care should also be given to working poor women. According to EU figures, in Greece, there is an increase of over 4% between the years 2008 to 2013, both in terms of age groups of 18-64 female workers and between permanent and part-time working women (source: Eurostat, 2015). At the same time, the 'target' group is widening, with higher rates of women becoming poor mainly in younger ages. In addition, the refugee crisis and the increase in refugee flows, as a result of the war in Syria, form a new landscape for refugee women and their children, which account for 60% of the refugee population and seek protection in Greece.

Based on the above situation, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality puts the focus of its intervention policies on women who belong to vulnerable social groups or suffer multiple

discrimination, including, but not limited to:

1. Women at the poverty line
2. Women heads of single parent families
3. Homeless women
4. Roma women
5. Migrant women
6. Women refugees or asylum seekers
7. Women victims of violence, torture or trafficking in human beings
8. Women with disabilities / chronic diseases
9. Drug-addicted women
10. Prisoners or prison released
11. Older women
12. Long-term unemployed women

2. The General Secretariat for Gender Equality, in order to be able to intervene effectively in the increasing needs of the above categories of women in the context of the ongoing economic crisis, initially established an organizational unit within the GSGE for women who suffer multiple discrimination, through the revision of the Ministry's Organizational Chart. Specifically, the newly established Department of Social Protection and Combating Multiple Discrimination (Directorate of Social Protection and Counseling Services) is responsible for:

-elaborating and promoting measures to tackle gender discrimination against persons belonging to vulnerable social groups (migrant women, refugee women, single parent families, Roma women, etc.) with a view to their social integration and social cohesion.

-working and networking with all relevant stakeholders to mainstream gender in the context of national, regional and local social policy planning for vulnerable social groups.

-designing, coordinating and implementing social networking and co-operation actions with supranational institutions and international organizations, as well as with national actors, on issues of multiple discrimination.

-providing of first-line services and counseling services on psychosocial support and legal counseling to women who face multiple discrimination (e.g migrant women, refugees, single parents, disabled people etc).

3. In December 2016, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE)/Ministry of Interior also signed a Protocol of Cooperation with the following stakeholders:

1. General Secretariat for Reception/Ministry of Migration Policy.
2. General Secretariat for Public Health/Ministry of Health.
3. Ministry of National Defense.
4. Research Center for Gender Equality.
5. Association of Greek Regions.
6. The Central Union of Greek Municipalities.
7. National Center for Social Solidarity.
8. Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government.

The aim of the Protocol is to adopt a common framework of procedures for identifying, referring and hosting, as well as providing counseling services and actions to women refugees, victims or potential victims of violence and to their children, as well as women refugees heads of single parent families, through the Network of Structures of the GSGE.

GSGE operates a Pan-Hellenic Network of 62 Structures (40 Counseling Centers, 21 Shelters across the country and a 24-hour SOS Helpline 15900) providing free counseling services, safe accommodation and other services and facilities to female victims of gender-based violence. For the 2014-2020 programming period, the GSGE extended the target group to include not only female victims of gender-based violence, but also women victims of multiple discrimination, such as refugees, migrants, Roma women, etc. in order to help eliminate social exclusion at all levels.

### **C. Eradication of gender based violence against women**

The General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE), as the competent governmental body for preventing and combating violence against women, has designed and continues to implement since 2010 the "National Programme for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women", which is the first comprehensive and coherent action plan at national level to combat gender-based violence. (domestic violence, rape, trafficking, sexual harassment).

For the first time, an integrated network of 62 structures has been set up and operates across the country for the prevention and treatment of all forms of violence against women (domestic violence, rape, trafficking, sexual harassment).

The Network includes:

A 24-hour SOS 15900 helpline.

The helpline is nation-wide, operates 365 days per year on a 24-hour basis, with local charge, and it offers counseling services both in Greek and English. It is also supported by the e-mail address: [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr)

40 Counseling Centers.

The Counseling Centers provide:

- psychosocial support (specialized counseling for women victims of gender-based violence),
- legal counseling and information on victims' rights, relevant legislation, procedures required to file a complaint, etc.
- legal aid (in cooperation with the local Bar Associations),
- labor counseling and enhancement of women's skills to enter the labor market, in cooperation with other organizations (e.g Hellenic Manpower Organization-OAED, Employment Promotion Centers, Municipal Social Services, etc.)
- counseling on sexual and reproductive health,
- referral of women victims accommodated to Shelters, to police and prosecution offices, courts, hospitals or health centers, social policy agencies, employment agencies, childcare facilities, etc., while implementing actions to prevent, communicate and raise awareness of local society.

21 Shelters for Women Victims of Violence

In addition to safe accommodation to women victims of violence and their children, the shelters provide additional psychosocial support, labor and legal counseling through

Counseling Centers, facilitate access to health services and the enrollment of children in schools

All services of the Network are FREE.

The purpose of these services is to empower women victims of violence and to help them regain their self-esteem, so that they can take responsibility for their professional, personal and family life and make the best decisions for their own future.

In the new programming period (2016-2020), services have been expanded to provide labor counseling and the target group has been expanded to women victims of multiple discriminations (refugees, single parents, Roma etc.).

In order to inform the public on violence against women, a major nationwide campaign was designed and implemented with the slogan: "You're not the only one, you're not alone" including relevant seminars, informational material in several languages (Greek, English, French, Albanian), TV and radio spots, cultural events, publicity on public transport, entries in Press, a webpage ([www.womensos.gr](http://www.womensos.gr)) and a facebook page as well as banners in web pages.

-A new awareness-raising campaign is planned to take place for the next three years under the new National Action Plan for Gender Equality.

The GSGE in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, has implemented a pilot awareness programme at schools for different groups of students ,teachers and parents on violence against women. Training material (presentations, video, and slides) on gender-based violence in youth relationships were produced for the needs of the training programme.

On May 11th 2011 Greece was among the first thirteen countries that signed the Convention on the Elimination of Violence against women and domestic violence in Istanbul, Turkey. As we speak the Greek Parliament is about to ratify the convention.

#### **D. Monitoring and collection of data.**

The General Secretariat for Gender Equality has developed and is currently operating a Monitoring Mechanism (Observatory) for strengthening of gender perspective and achieving the goal of gender equality in the planned and implemented policies. The Mechanism, apart from the monitoring system of policies of all agencies of the Government and local authorities and Regions, has also a rating system of policies results regarding to gender (gender impact assessment). The follow-up and evaluation of the policies is based on statistical data and the development of gender indicators according to the UN (12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action) and EU criteria.

The GSGE, in cooperation with the National Statistical Authority, publishes monthly newsletters on issues of the 12 thematic areas and raises awareness about the existing gender gaps in all fields of life.

#### **E. Political participation of women**

In the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020 (NAPGE), there is a separate priority axis for increasing the participation of women in decision-making. More specifically, the objectives and measures considered are:

1. Acceleration of equal participation of women in all areas of public and professional life, particularly in decision-making positions in parliament and in local/regional government. The proposed measures relate to legislation and institutional interventions to enhance the effectiveness of quotas, study on operation and impact of existing quotas (Gender impact assessment), creation of an online catalog and database of women MPs that have emerged in governmental positions of responsibility from the foundation of Greek State.

2. The elimination of discrimination against women and ensuring gender equality in political and public life, with promotional activities and publicity of the Convention, the Optional Protocol and the CEDAW Committee General Recommendations, the integration of the gender dimension in Standing Orders, information and awareness for democratic parties to implement interventions and action plans increasing the participation of women, enrichment of the media agenda with issues of gender equality and awareness in sexism in politics.

3. Policies for the balanced participation of women in elections. The proposed measures are: information and awareness campaign to increase women's participation in local/regional elections (2019), the creation of networking and collaboration platform for enhancing women's participation in local and regional government, ensuring permanent and stable operation of the Office for Gender Equality municipalities (KEDE & ENPE) and information and awareness campaign to increase women's participation in elections to the European parliament (2019).

4. Develop the capacity and skills of women to actively participate in processes and decision-making and in leadership positions with measures such as: training programs, strengthening and development of elected women's skills and candidates for local and regional elections (2019) and the election of the European Parliament (2019), to strengthen women's / feminist organizations for their active participation in the empowerment of women and special groups of women (implementing mentoring programs, implementation of training programs and empowerment of young women) and the creation of networks of women (elected networks, elected in positions of responsibility, experts, etc.).

#### **F. Research Centre for Gender Equality.**

The Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI- founded in 1994 and supervised by the Ministry of Interior), has a dual focus both on conducting social research on gender equality issues and on using this knowledge to propose and implement specific policies, practices and actions to promote gender equality. It is underlined that the majority of the publications are in Greek.