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STUDY ON THE TRANSLATION OF ARTICLE 16 OF  
REGULATION (EC) N°1083/2006, ON THE  
PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY, NON-  
DISCRIMINATION AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR  
DISABLED PERSONS, INTO COHESION POLICY  
PROGRAMMES 2007-2013 CO-FINANCED BY THE  
ERDF AND THE COHESION FUND

## **INTERMEDIATE REPORT**

May 15, 2009

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## ABBREVIATIONS

MA – Managing Authority  
CCI number – Operational Programme reference number in the Commission’s data base  
CF – Cohesion Fund  
EC – European Commission  
ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
ESF – European Social Fund  
EU 10+2 (EU12) – The new EU Member States which acceded in 2004 (10) and 2007 (2)  
EU15 – The 15 EU Member States prior to May 2004  
MA – Managing Authority  
MS – Member State  
OMC – Open Method of Co-ordination  
OP – Operational Programme  
pct. – percent  
SF – Structural Fund

## INTRODUCTION

This Intermediate Report was produced for the 'Study on the Translation of Article 16 of Regulation EC1083/2006, on the promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons into Cohesion policy programmes 2007-2013 co-financed by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund'. The contract to carry out this study was signed in December 2008. It is expected that the study will be completed in September 2009.

As stated in the Tender Specifications, the overall aim of the study is:

To establish to what extent Article 16 of the General Regulation (EC) N°1083/2006 is reflected in cohesion policy programmes 2007-2013 and to present some good practice examples

Four Tasks are to be carried out in order to complete the study:

- 1) Task 1: a literature review;
- 2) Task 2: a review of the translation of Article 16 into Cohesion policy programmes;
- 3) Task 3: case studies – good practice examples;
- 4) Task 4: conclusions and recommendations (including Self Assessment Guide, which can be used by programme authorities interested in reviewing their performance as regards Article 16).

According to the Tender Specifications the Intermediate Report is to:

- Provide an overview of the Tasks carried out so far (Task 1 and Task 2).

Task 1 (the literature review) was carried out for the Inception Report. The text of literature review is presented in Annex 1. The literature review led to a number of research questions, which were then integrated in the methodology for conducting other Tasks.

### **In this Report:**

- The process of Task 2 (the review of Operational Programmes) is explained;
- The results of Task 2 are provided;
- Based on these results, 15 cases for good practice analysis (Task 3) are suggested and then presented briefly.

# 1. THE PROCESS OF REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The Operational Programmes (OPs) were reviewed in March–April 2009. The following analytical tools were used in order to ensure that the review process produces valid data from which reliable conclusions regarding the integration of Article 16 into the texts of OPs can be drawn:

- *Firstly*, a representative sample of 50 OPs (out of 316) was selected;
- *Secondly*, a standardized review checklist was prepared;
- *Thirdly*, a pilot analysis was carried out and an expert package prepared in order to ensure comparable interpretation. Help and consultation available throughout the review process.

A short overview of each of these points is presented below.

## 1.1 Selection of 50 Operational Programmes for review

**Four** selection criteria were developed in order to construct a representative sample of cohesion policy programmes (See Table 1).

**Table 1. The selection criteria for 50 OPs**

The Selection Criteria			
1	2	3	4
Balance of objectives	Balance between national/ sectoral and regional OPs	Balance between EU15 and EU12 MS	Contextual balance, based on welfare regimes
<p><i>All the OPs fall under one of these categories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convergence</li> <li>• Competitiveness</li> <li>• Convergence and Competitiveness</li> <li>• Territorial Co-operation</li> </ul>	<p><i>All the OPs fall under one of these categories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National/ sectoral</li> <li>• Regional</li> <li>• Transnational (cross-border)</li> </ul>	<p><i>All the OPs fall under one of these categories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU15</li> <li>• EU12 (the MS which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007)</li> </ul>	<p><i>All the OPs fall under one of these categories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nordic model</li> <li>• Atlantic (Anglo-Saxon) model</li> <li>• Central European (Continental) model</li> <li>• Southern European model</li> <li>• Eastern European model</li> <li>• Baltic model</li> <li>• South-East European model</li> </ul>

Source: PPMI

The final choice of criteria was made in order to ensure an appropriate balance between the **MS contexts** (EU15 vs. EU12 MS, the types of welfare states) and **choices directly related to SF and CF** (such as cohesion policy objectives, regional vs. national programmes). Specific criteria may somewhat correlate with each other (e.g. most of the OPs from EU12 will be financed under the

Convergence objective). On the other hand, all of the criteria emphasise some distinct aspects which may influence how gender equality, non-discrimination, and accessibility for disabled persons are integrated into the OPs.

The final sample of OPs selected for review comprised 40 programmes implemented within a single Member State (falling under the objectives of convergence and competitiveness) and 10 cross-border/ transnational programmes (territorial co-operation objective). Among the OPs implemented within a single Member State (see also Table 2):

- There were 25 OPs from EU15 and 15 OPs from EU12;
- 20 were implemented under convergence objective, 19 - under competitiveness objective and 1 under both convergence as well as competitiveness objective;
- 3 OPs belonged to countries pursuing Nordic model of welfare state, 3 Anglo-Saxon model, 10 Central European model, 10 Southern European model, 9 Eastern European model, 3 Baltic model and 2 South-East European model.

**Table 2. The distribution of reviewed OPs in terms of objective, welfare model, national – regional criteria and EU15 - EU12 criteria**

Timing of member-ship	Welfare models	Convergence objective		Competitiveness objective		Convergence and Competitiveness		Total (row percent)
		National/sectoral	Regional	National / sectoral	Regional	National/sectoral	Regional	
EU15	Nordic model	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
	Atlantic (Anglo-Saxon) model	0	1	0	2	0	0	3
	Central European (continental) model	0	3	0	7	0	0	10
	Southern European model*	1	3	0	5	1	0	10
EU12*	Eastern European model	3	4	0	2	0	0	9
	Baltic model	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
	South-East European model	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total (column percent)</b>		9	11	1	18	1	0	40

Source: PPMI

\* Two EU12 MSs belong to the Southern European model: Cyprus and Malta.

## 1.2. The process of OP review

The Tender Specifications set the following requirement for the review of the programmes:

[...] the purpose of the review is to examine the extent to which Article 16 is reflected in the programmes and the management and implementation systems which have been put in place since programme approval.

The programmes were reviewed in March-April 2009. Most of the texts used for the review were in their original language, however, in some cases (mainly, OPs from EU10) their English translations were analysed.

The review of the OPs was carried out using a standardized (i.e. uniform for all programmes) checklist. It addressed all stages of policy implementation, from programme design to evaluation and monitoring. The checklist was pilot-tested in reviewing 2 programmes. Then it was corrected accordingly in order to make it more effective in identifying the main statements which are of interest for this study (the checklist is presented in Annex 3). A memo for all the experts involved in the review process was prepared, aiming to ensure a more coherent interpretation of texts of various OPs (Annex 4).

For each of the checklist's questions experts taking part in the review were asked to provide an assessment in the scale from 1 to 3 as to how a specific principle (gender equality, non-discrimination, accessibility) was reflected in the OP under review. Score '1' was given when the OP obviously satisfied the criterion (explicit statement or statements related to a specific criterion; the way the specific criterion is integrated in the programme may potentially constitute a good practice, which could be of interest to other OPs). Score '2' was to suggest that the OP somewhat satisfies the criterion (explicitly or implicitly). A score of '3' indicated that this particular criterion is not being addressed at all, or no information is provided in the OP.

The review was supplemented by a short e-mail based interview with the representatives of Managing Authorities of the 50 OPs. The major aim of this interview was to find out how Article 16 (namely, the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination and access to the disabled) has been implemented **since the adoption** of the Operational Programme (the full text of the e-mail is provided in Annex 5). As the participation in the survey was not too active, various measures were undertaken (reminders, direct phone calls) to increase the response rate. As a result, 28 Managing Authorities took part in the survey. Their replies provided some additional information, which was used to make the final selection of cases for 15 good practice studies.

In the next chapter the results of OP review and MA survey are discussed. Importantly, this exercise provides only limited insights into such policy stages as project selection and reporting, therefore, a more detailed analysis will be undertaken in the case studies.

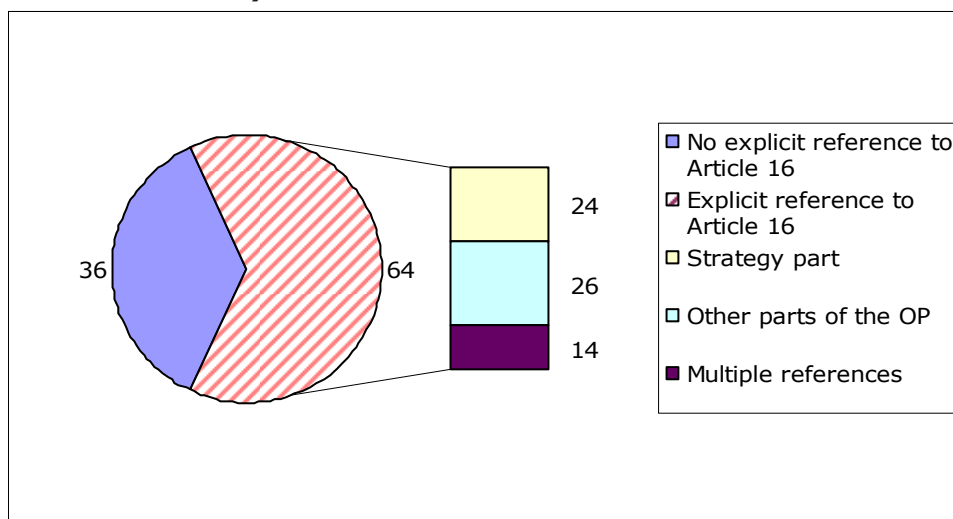


## 2. THE RESULTS OF OP REVIEW AND MA SURVEY

In this section an initial discussion of practices identified through the OP review and MA survey is carried out. Importantly, this is a preliminary analysis. It will be further developed for the Task 4 (Conclusions and Recommendations) and will be included in the Final Report.

To begin with it is useful to consider the extent to which Article 16 is referred to explicitly in the texts of OPs. This provides some indication as for the level of awareness of OPs regarding the requirements set in this Article. As it is shown in Figure 1, 32 OPs (64% of 50 OPs under review) made an explicit reference to Article 16. The most common places for the reference are the strategy description and other parts which usually happen to be chapters (or annexes) on cross-cutting issues or co-ordination with Community policies. 7 OPs (14%) referred to Article 16 in various places of OP (strategy, description of priority axis or other parts)<sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 1. Explicit references to Article 16 (percentage of the 50 reviewed OPs)**



18 OPs (36%) did not mention Article 16 in any context. However, this does not mean that they did not take the equal opportunities and related issues into consideration. Quite on the opposite, 5 of 15 OPs selected for good practice analysis (see Chapter 3 of this Report) do not make an explicit reference to Article 16 at all.

Therefore, a deeper analysis of integration of the themes of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility is necessary in order to understand better how the requirements of Article 16 are followed in OPs. Indeed, it is not the 'letter' (i.e. formal references)

<sup>1</sup> These are the OPs 'Tuscany' (Italy), 'Sicily' (Italy), 'Increase of Economic Competitiveness' (Romania), 'Slovakia - Czech Republic', 'South Great Plain' (Hungary), 'Central Hungary', 'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland).

of this Article which is of interest to this study, but genuine integration the three themes with or without explicit mentioning of Article 16. Thus, the following questions are discussed in the next sections:

- Overall approach of OPs towards integration of principles set in Article 16;
- Article 16 in the programme design;
- Importance of Article 16 in programme implementation.

## **2.1. General strategy in integrating the requirements of Article 16**

### **2.1.1. From add-on to a comprehensive integration**

The review of the 50 OPs showed that most of the programmes do take the principles of Article 16 into consideration at least to some extent. However, there is a clear variation in terms of comprehensiveness and consistency. Indeed, regarding the integration of Article 16 into the text of an individual programme three different strategies may be identified:

- Add-on;
- Intentional aspiration;
- Comprehensive integration.

Firstly, the dimensions of gender equality, non-discrimination and/or accessibility for the disabled may leave an impression of an **add-on**. It happens when a programme's concern for equality issues appears rather declarative. For instance, having described the major challenges or strategy, the programme mentions that 'in addition' the horizontal principles such as equal opportunities are important. No further detail is provided. No substantive measures to substantiate such claims are identified either: no consultations with expert organizations, no relevant selection criteria, no suitable indicators, no serious obligations in terms of monitoring, evaluation and/or reporting.

In most cases the way equal opportunities are integrated in the programme can be called an **intentional aspiration**. In this case relevant dimensions are recognised as horizontal priorities and are given quite a lot of attention in the text (especially in the analysis part or a separate chapter devoted to the cross-cutting issues). However, the issues addressed in the analysis are often not reflected in chapters describing strategy, priority axes or programme implementation (or vice versa).

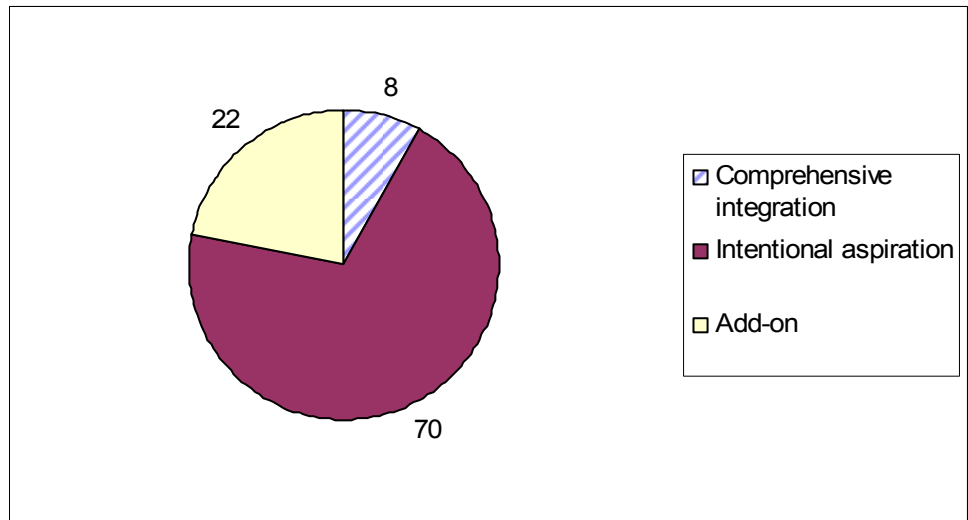
Finally, **comprehensive integration** means that a programme consistently discusses the cross-cutting themes. Elaborate context analysis is provided regarding the needs of various disadvantaged groups; it leads to a well thought-out strategy and description of the priorities. Various management arrangements are provided for: special guidelines and advice from equal opportunities officers, training and development of institutional capabilities. Equality impact assessment may be carried out or resources may be allocated specifically for the implementation of equal opportunities.

Any attempt to allocate specific OPs to one of the three categories is not exact science. However, it is possible to do this by combining some quantitative analysis with qualitative judgement. The

*quantitative analysis* is based on the summary ratings of each programme<sup>2</sup>. Overall, the summary ratings of the OPs range from 2.15 (the best) to 2.98. A working assumption is that the programmes with ratings of up to 2.30 are the most likely to present a case of *comprehensive integration*. Meanwhile, if the rating is more than 2.85, the case of *add-on* is very probable.

Then, a *qualitative assessment* is necessary for numerous reasons. *Firstly*, the programmes were reviewed by a number of experts from different countries and various backgrounds; therefore, one must control for an element of subjectivity of the summary ratings. *Secondly*, the differences between ratings of OPs in many cases are too small to demonstrate a meaningful difference (e.g. 0.1-0.2). Hence, if a programme with a rating of 2.3 is said to be a case of comprehensive integration, then why this is not true for a programme rated at 2.4? This can only be determined by expert judgment. *Finally*, some OPs from the EU12 (Estonia, Lithuania) received quite high summary ratings. Yet a deeper examination shows that these MS are stronger on the analysis/ design rather than on the implementation side. Therefore, these OPs are listed in the category of intentional aspiration. Figure 2 presents an overall distribution of OPs in terms of the three strategies of integrating Article 16. In Table 3 all the OPs are listed under one of the three strategies.

**Figure 2. Distribution of the reviewed OPs according to the three strategies (percentage of the 50 reviewed OPs)**



<sup>2</sup> As described in Chapter 1.2, a checklist was used for review of each programme and reviewers were asked to provide quantitative grades for each of the review criteria. The grade of '1' was given if a criterion was obviously satisfied, '2' – if somewhat satisfied, '3' – if not satisfied. A **summary rating** is calculated by adding all grades of all criteria and dividing them by the number of criteria. As a result, the summary ratings may mathematically range from 1 (the best) to 3 (the worst performance). However, the best summary ratings in practice start at 2.15 as no OPs mentioned any Article 16-related practices under some of review criteria.

**Table 3. The strategies used by OPs for integrating the principles listed in Article 16**

Comprehensive integration	Intentional aspiration		Add-on
Operational Programme 'Stockholm'	'Upper Austria'	'Sicily' (Italy)	'Wallonia (Hainaut)' (Belgium)
'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK)	'Styria' (Austria)	'Tuscany' (Italy)	'West Netherlands'
'North West England' (UK)	'Regional Development' (Bulgaria)	'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania)	'Thüringen' (Germany)
'United Kingdom - Ireland'	'Sustainable Development and Competitiveness' (Cyprus)	'Entrepreneurship and Innovation' (Latvia)	'Saxony' (Germany)
	'Prague' (the Czech Republic)	'Lower Silesia' (Poland)	'Lisbon' (Portugal)
	'Central Moravia' (the Czech Republic)	'Warminsko-Mazurskie' (Poland)	'Algarve' (Portugal)
	'Innovation and Knowledge' (Denmark)	'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland)	'Italy - Malta'
	'Development of Living Environment' (Estonia)	'Increase of Economic Competitiveness' (Romania)	'Slovakia - Czech Republic'
	'Southern Finland'	'Health' (Slovakia)	'Slovenia - Hungary'
	'Champagne Ardenne' (France)	'Strengthening Regional Development Potentials' (Slovenia)	'South East Europe (SEE)'
	'Loire' (France)	'Cantabria' (Spain)	'North West Europe (NWE)'
	'Rhône-Alpes' (France)	'Aragon' (Spain)	
	'North Rhine-Westphalia' (Germany)	'Central Hungary'	
	'Digital Convergence' (Greece)	'South Great Plain' (Hungary)	
	'Attica' (Greece)	'Poland - Germany'	
	'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)' (Ireland)	'Sweden - Norway'	
	'Trento' (Italy)	'Greece - Bulgaria'	
		'Belgium - France'	

Surely, one should not to overestimate the categorisation of OPs in terms of the three strategies. It is plausible that while the OP texts are not very elaborate on equal opportunities, the relevant themes are addressed in some implementation documents and national law.

### 2.1.2. The most visible themes and stages of implementation

Among the three themes of Article 16, **gender equality** is by far the most developed and appears in an absolute majority of OPs. This is understandable, since this dimension has the longest tradition in the EU legal framework. The relatively stronger tradition in addressing gender equality issues is especially visible in the programme implementation matters: project selection, monitoring and partnership. Among the disadvantaged groups addressed in the context of **non-discrimination**, the disabled, the elderly, Roma, immigrants and minority ethnic groups were mentioned most often. Meanwhile, due to its rather technical nature, the issue of **accessibility** for the disabled is barely addressed<sup>3</sup>. To the extent this issue is addressed, it is most visible in the OPs aimed at infrastructure development (see Table 4). This could have been expected as the very notion of accessibility refers first and foremost to the technical side of access to infrastructure and services.

**Table 4. OPs which put a relatively stronger emphasis on the aspect of accessibility for the disabled**

<b>Name of OP</b>	<b>Main areas of investment</b>
'Development of Living Environment' (Estonia)	Infrastructure development (various areas)
'Digital Convergence' (Greece)	Information society infrastructure
'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania)	Infrastructure development (various areas)
'Health' (Slovakia)	Health infrastructure
'Central Hungary'	Infrastructure development, services to businesses and business support
Lower Silesia (Poland)	Transport, access to buildings, tourist infrastructure and other areas
'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland)	Infrastructure development (various areas)

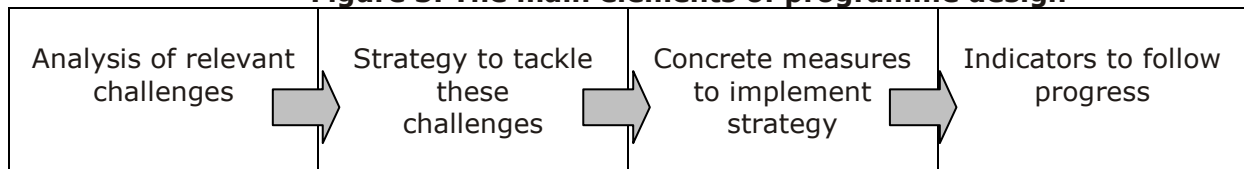
## 2.2. Integration of Article 16 into the programme design

Four elements of programme design were assessed during the OP review process: analysis, strategy, description of priority axis, indicators. Ideally, these elements should be linked and follow each other, as shown in Figure 3. This indeed can be said for the 4 programmes which are considered as presenting the case of comprehensive integration of the principles of Article 16 (see Table 3). In addition, quite a number of the OPs do provide relevant information for all of these elements (see Table 5 in Section 2.2.4.), however these OPs are not consistent enough (e.g., challenges discussed in the analysis part are not quite reflected when describing priority axes).

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<sup>3</sup> This has a conceptual as well as policy side. Conceptually, non-discrimination with regard to the disabled is covered through the second principle. Meanwhile, accessibility being a technical term is often dealt with by the national law and, to the extent the MS have set accessibility in their national law, it is reflected in the SF interventions without an explicit reference to the term of accessibility itself.

**Figure 3. The main elements of programme design**



### **2.2.1. Analysis**

Three main aspects were assessed when reviewing analytical chapters of the 50 OPs from the perspective of Article 16:

- is relevant statistical information presented;
- are the relevant challenges identified and analysed;
- does the SWOT analysis take into consideration the equality issues.

In the text below the most common and outstanding practices are discussed. Then, by the way of a summary

Table 5 points out the OPs where the situation analysis is the most explicit or informative. These OPs present at least some statistics on equality issues, discuss the relevant challenges and (usually) put a reference to these challenges in the SWOT analysis.

47 OPs (94% of the reviewed OPs) provided at least some **statistical information** about the situation of women and men. In most cases it was a gender-based comparison of the unemployment, employment and economic activity rates, education achievement, wage levels and participation in new business creation. 30 OPs (60%) provided some information on other disadvantaged groups (elderly, the disabled, Roma). Examples of comprehensive statistics can be found in the OPs 'North West England', 'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK), 'Stockholm', 'Warminsko-Mazurskie' (Poland) and others.

In order to improve the equality situation, it is important to identify clearly the most pressing issues. The **challenges** faced by women are addressed in 40 OPs (80%): professional segregation, lack of childcare facilities etc. Difficulties experienced by various discriminated-against groups were touched upon in 32 OPs (64%). For instance, the OP 'Warminsko-Mazurskie' (Poland) noted "difficulties of reaching the place of studies or education infrastructure" for the disabled. However, given the overall picture, very few OPs (9) (18%) conducted some analysis of accessibility-related issues.

35 OPs (70%) outline gender equality and/ or non-discrimination issues directly in the **SWOT analysis**. Among the notable examples is the OP 'Aragon' (Spain) which provides a special SWOT table for "Equal opportunities, conciliation and inclusion". The OP 'Stockholm' organizes the whole analysis as an extended SWOT table. Among the weaknesses, the most commonly mentioned are: lower levels of employment, entrepreneurship and skills of the disadvantaged groups (women, ethnic minorities). OPs from EU12 tend to stress the unfavourable situation of the Roma population, while the Western European OPs are concerned with the integration of the immigrant communities. Only 5 OPs (10%) mention accessibility-

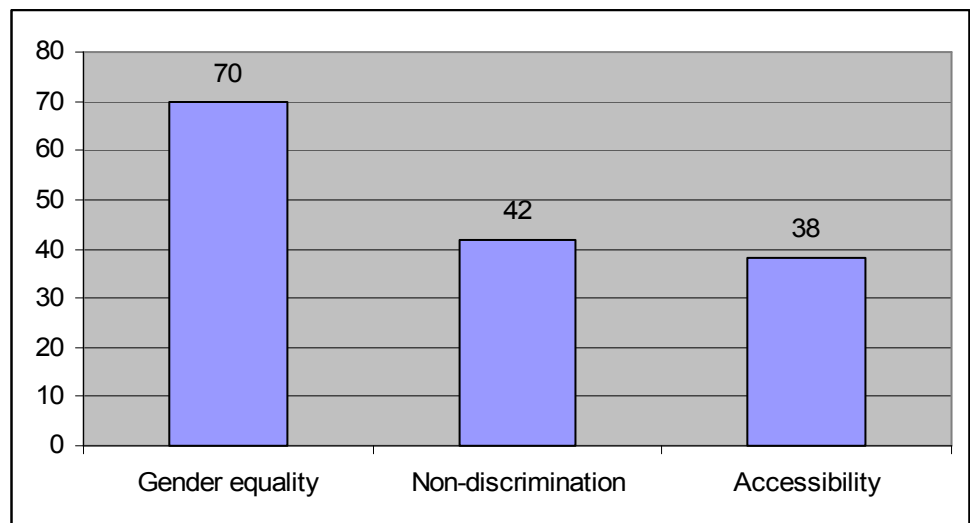
related questions (e.g. OP 'Central Hungary' points out to "absence of disabled access to public institutions and public areas")<sup>4</sup>.

### 2.2.2. OP Strategy

In the absolute majority of cases the requirements of Article 16 were taken into account by naming 'equal opportunities' a **horizontal or cross-cutting priority**. In total, 35 OPs (70%) took a stand in terms of gender equality, 21 (42%) acknowledged the principle of non-discrimination and 19 (38%) related their objectives to accessibility for the disabled to some extent (see Figure 4). Some programmes even identified **quantifiable targets**: 19 (38%) in the field of gender equality, 8 (16%) in non-discrimination and 2 (4%) in accessibility. Often these were related to the indicators described later on, but some OPs also quantified the overarching goals such as:

- to achieve that at least 50% of people participating in joint education or training activities are women (OP 'Slovenia - Hungary');
- at least 15% of participants in project activities are young people (OP 'Sweden-Norway');
- 25% of all the projects under the programme directly aim to promote integration and diversity (OP 'Stockholm').

**Figure 4. Relative emphasis of the three themes in the strategy part of OPs (percentage of the 50 reviewed OPs)\***



\* The three categories are not self-exclusive. Some OPs take two or all of them into consideration

Table 5 indicates, among other things, which OPs provide the most specific information on Article 16 in their strategy part.

### 2.2.3. Priority axes

Two main aspects were checked when reviewing descriptions of the priority axis in the OPs:

- if in the actual description there is a reference to any of the themes of Article 16;

<sup>4</sup> These 5 OPs are: 'Central Hungary', 'Digital Convergence' (Greece), 'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania), 'Entrepreneurship and Innovation' (Latvia), 'Belgium - France'

- if there are concrete measures identified aimed to tackle these themes.

40 OPs (80%) acknowledged principles of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility **in describing** at least one of the priority axes. Less than 22 (44%) raised the issue of accessibility. Some went into great lengths elaborating the relationship of priority axes to the dimensions of Article 16 (e.g. OP 'Sweden – Norway' and 'Stockholm'). The principle of accessibility was more often encountered in the description of priority axes aimed at infrastructure development, especially in the area of transport.

These OPs also proposed some important and **specific measures**: support to business initiatives of women and ethnic minorities, education and training to disadvantaged groups, development of various public services aimed at the groups facing discrimination, investments into transport and IT infrastructure in order to improve accessibility for disabled etc. Intentions to use the **cross-financing** option so that some ESF-type expenses could be included into projects co-financed by ERDF were mentioned in few cases. To an extent such intentions did appear in the OP text, various training activities were usually referred to.

Table 5 shows, which OPs single out the most concrete measures that are relevant from the perspective of Article 16.

#### 2.2.4. Indicators

Two main approaches are possible when formulating indicators for horizontal themes:

- a) disaggregated data;
- b) special indicators.

The most common approach to development of indicators in the OPs is **disaggregation of data by gender** (28 OPs (56%) have such indicators; usually they measure the number of jobs created, number of participants in trainings, number of enterprises created or supported). 15 OPs (30%) set some **special gender-specific indicators**: female earnings as a percentage of male earnings (OP 'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK)), percentage of female graduates of science and technical specialisations in relation to the total number of graduates (OP 'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland)) and others.

Indicators **disaggregated by other groups** such as ethnic minorities, the elderly or the disabled (in the scope of non-discrimination) were found in 13 OPs (26%) and the same number of OPs projected some **special indicators** in this respect. OP 'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK) can be again mentioned as an example as it planned to register the number of enterprises adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems. Very few OPs (6) suggested accessibility-related indicators.

The OPs 'Sweden–Norway' and 'Stockholm' stand out as having **sophisticated systems** of equality indicators at many levels. The OP 'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania) suggests indicators at two levels (results and the strategic context). However, many OPs settled for an easier (in terms of collecting data and projecting the target values) solution and simply planned to monitor inputs, that is



the number of projects (or resources allocated to them) in the field of equal opportunities and/or social inclusion.

The last column of

Table 5 indicates which OPs provide the most specific information on indicators that can be used to assess progress in implementing at least one of Article 16 themes.

**Table 5. Integration of the themes of Article 16 into the programme design\***

OP	Analysis	OP Strategy	Priority Axes	Indicators
'Algarve' (Portugal)				
'Aragon' (Spain)	✓	✓		✓
'Attica' (Greece)				
'Belgium - France'	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)' (Ireland)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Cantabria' (Spain)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Central Hungary'	✓	✓	✓	
'Central Moravia' (the Czech Republic)	✓	✓	✓	
'Champagne Ardenne' (France)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Development of Living Environment' (Estonia)	✓		✓	✓
'Digital Convergence' (Greece)	✓	✓	✓	
'Entrepreneurship and Innovation' (Latvia)	✓	✓		✓
'Greece - Bulgaria'			✓	
'Health' (Slovakia)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Increase of Economic Competitiveness' (Romania)			✓	
'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland)				✓
'Innovation and Knowledge' (Denmark)	✓	✓		
'Italy - Malta'				
'Lisbon' (Portugal)				
'Loire' (France)				✓
'Lower Silesia' (Poland)	✓	✓		
'North Rhine-Westphalia' (Germany)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'North West England' (UK)	✓		✓	
'North West Europe (NWE)'				
'Poland - Germany'			✓	✓
'Prague' (Czech Republic)	✓		✓	
'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Regional Development' (Bulgaria)	✓		✓	✓
'Rhone-Alpes' (France)				
'Saxony' (Germany)	✓	✓		
'Sicily' (Italy)	✓	✓	✓	
'Slovakia - Czech Republic'				
'Slovenia - Hungary'				

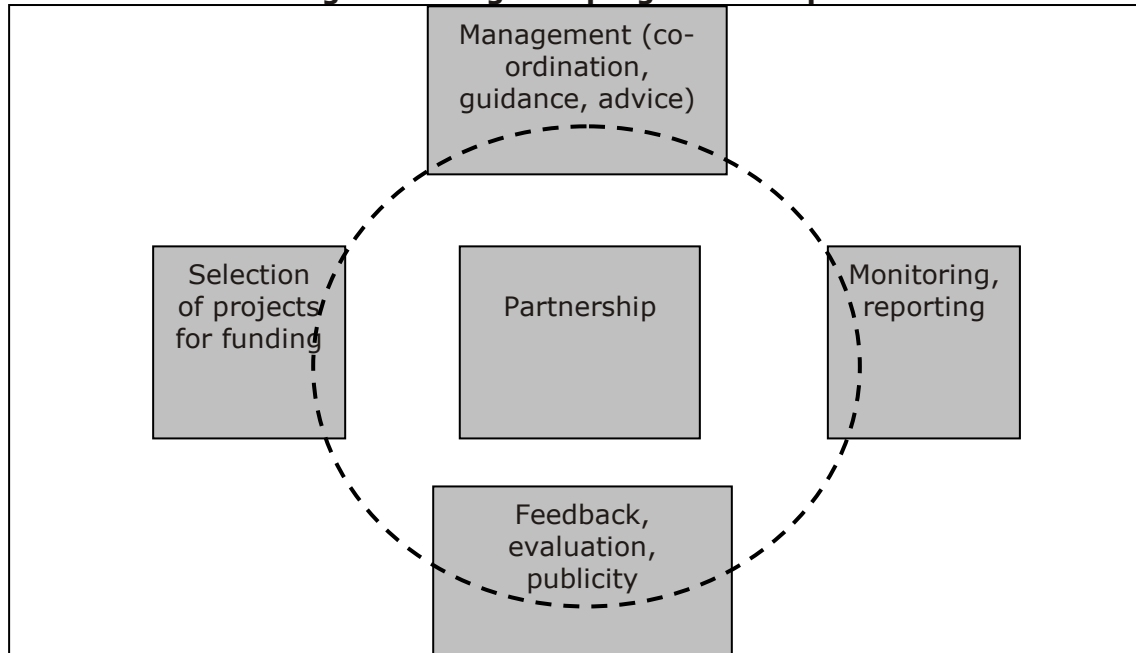
'South East Europe (SEE)'			✓	
'South Great Plain'		✓	✓	✓
'Southern Finland'	✓	✓	✓	
'Stockholm' (Sweden)	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Strengthening Regional Development Potentials' (Slovenia)			✓	
'Styria' (Austria)	✓		✓	
'Sustainable Development and Competitiveness' (Cyprus)				
'Sweden - Norway'	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Thüringen' (Germany)	✓			
'Trento' (Italy)	✓			
'Tuscany' (Italy)	✓			
'United Kingdom - Ireland'	✓		✓	✓
'Upper Austria'	✓	✓	✓	
'Wallonia (Hainaut)' (Belgium)				
'Warminsko-Mazurskie' (Poland)	✓	✓		✓
'West Netherlands'				
'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK)	✓	✓	✓	✓

\*The checked areas demonstrate which OPs are the most specific on practices which are relevant from the perspective of Article 16

### 2.3. Integration of Article 16 into the programme implementation systems

Five processes of programme implementation were analysed during the review of OPs. For analytical purposes these processes may be represented as a cycle starting with a project selection decision and ending with evaluation and feedback (see Figure 5). In reality these processes are of course parallel and interlinked. Therefore, ideally, an OP would be expected to think through all the processes of programme implementation (e.g. if equality issues are given a strong emphasis during project selection, then management structures should be geared to provide advice and guidance on these issues).

**Figure 5. Stages of programme implementation**



Nine programmes (18%) do address all or most stages of implementation (these are the OPs which were singled as cases of comprehensive integration as well as some OPs under the category of intentional aspiration). However, it must be said that the OPs are not required and expected to be very elaborate on most of these aspects. After the approval most of the OPs are usually followed by a number of specific documents which describe implementation system in a much greater detail. The case studies to be carried out during the next stage of this assignment will analyse these implementation documents. Thus only the case studies can reveal the full extent of integration of Article 16 considerations into the implementation system of OP.

In Sections 2.3.1 – 2.3.4 the relevant practices found in the texts of OPs are overviewed according to different stages of implementation. Then Table 6 lists the OPs which make the most explicit references to such practices.

### **2.3.1. Project selection**

Two main approaches are possible when designing project selection mechanisms to take into account the equality issues:

- a) minimum standards (i.e. all projects have to take into consideration equal opportunities and/ or related issues as an eligibility criteria);
- b) prioritisation (i.e. equal opportunities taken into consideration when taking funding decisions).

25 OPs (50%) mention that all the projects have to comply with at least some **minimum standards** concerning either gender equality and/ or non-discrimination and/ or accessibility for the disabled. 20 OPs (40%) claimed that during the selection process **priority will be given** to projects addressing equal opportunities and related issues.

Most of the OPs (which discuss the procedure of project selection) mention that all **project applicants will have to explain** the equal opportunities impact of their projects. The OPs also indicate that more specific selection criteria (including those relevant from the perspective of equal opportunities) will be developed later, in various programme implementation documents. Nevertheless, some OPs were still quite explicit: e.g. the OP 'South Great Plain' (Hungary) stated that "applicants must substantively address the issue of equal opportunities, and they must take steps towards implementing equal opportunities in their organisation". Another example: the OP 'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland) indicated that in providing support to education infrastructure proportion of men and women among the science students will be taken into account.

### 2.3.2. Programme management

The main management tools used to integrate better various aspects relevant from the perspective of Article 16 are:

- **proactive measures to help the disadvantaged groups** to take advantage of the funding opportunities offered by the OP (7 cases (14%)). For example, OP 'Central Hungary' even plans to offer special support by Roma experts for Roma beneficiaries;
- **various tools aimed to help the project managers** and various stakeholders to better incorporate the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility, including guidelines, manuals, specialist advice, exchange of good practices (14 OPs (28%)). Among these tools **specialised training** is foreseen to organisations responsible for project selection, management and monitoring (OPs 'Trento', 'Stockholm', 'North West England').

### 2.3.3. Partnership

Various organisations dealing with equality matters **were usually included** in the process of preparation of the OP (30 cases (60%)). In most of the cases (28 (56%)) among them there were organisations dealing with the issues of gender equality (both state institutions and NGOs). Yet organisations representing various disadvantaged groups, such as the disabled or Roma, **were consulted** (e.g. OPs 'Innovation and Knowledge' (Denmark), 'Attica' (Greece)) or **provided inputs** (OP 'Border, Midland and Western' (Ireland)). After the approval of OP, these institutions and organisations usually became part of an **institutionalised relationship** which involves them in monitoring or even project selection and management of the OP. Table 6 demonstrates which OPs were the most explicit about integrating the issues of equal opportunities in the OP through the partnership process.

### 2.3.4. Monitoring, reporting and feedback (evaluation, publicity)

The processes of monitoring, evaluation, information and publicity, and reporting are related to each other and indeed overlap in their mission (in essence, feedback and accountability). For example, monitoring data is collected so that it could be reported and evaluated. The data collated in the reports and evaluations can be publicised, etc. Table 6 indicates which OPs provided for some substantive practices at these stages of programme

implementation. The most common specific practices are discussed below.

At the stage of **monitoring**, three related approaches are the most common. *Firstly*, **inclusion of organizations** (state institutions, NGOs; full member or observer status) promoting the rights of various disadvantaged groups into the Monitoring Committee. In most of the cases the organisations dealing with women rights are included (37 OPs (74%)), but in some cases organisations of the disabled, Roma, other ethnic groups etc. are represented, too. *Secondly*, a commitment to ensure **gender balance** in the Monitoring Committee is undertaken; usually this means that representatives of each sex should make up no less than 40 and no more than 60 percent of its members. *Thirdly*, special **working groups** under the Monitoring Committee were envisaged to discuss the implementation of the horizontal priorities (e.g. OP 'Digital Convergence' (Greece), 'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania)).

15 OPs (30%) have provided for some special **information measures** to reach out to the disadvantaged groups. For instance, OP 'Italy-Malta' suggested that it would devote "specific attention on such theme [of equal opportunities] in the definition and implementation of the communication campaigns". OP 'South Great Plain' (Hungary) also promised that "special attention shall be given to providing direct information and help with project generation" to the organizations representing the most disadvantaged groups. Italian regional OP 'Trento' plans a "communication campaign on participation of women in the social and economy life".

19 programmes (38%) indicated that information about the OP's impact on the various dimensions of equal opportunities will be **reported** (e.g., on a yearly basis). Sometimes it is just an intention to **collect data**, such as the numbers of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (OPs 'United Kingdom-Ireland', 'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania). OP 'Central Hungary' mention that **special reports** on the compliance with the principle of non-discrimination will be compiled and published.

20 OPs (40%) mentioned that they are going to assess achievements on equal opportunities in the evaluation reports. Several OPs plan to carry out special evaluations devoted to various **horizontal priorities** (e.g. OPs 'Strengthening Regional Development Potentials' (Slovenia), 'Central Hungary', 'South Great Plain' (Hungary), 'Warminsko-Mazurskie' (Poland) and others).

In 28 cases (56%) the **ex-ante evaluation** drew the attention of those involved in the preparation of the programme to equality issues. Usually, the major finding was very straightforward: the **horizontal priorities are important** and they should be better integrated. As a result, the OPs indicated that more information was provided on ethnic minority groups (OP 'United Kingdom-Ireland'), monitoring system was amended (OP 'Strengthening Regional Development Potentials' (Slovenia), gender equality and equality between different age groups was better taken into account (OP 'Southern Finland').

Two programmes carried out a full **equality impact analysis** (OPs 'North West England' and 'United Kingdom-Ireland'). The OP

'Cantabria' (Spain) mentioned that gender impact analysis is to be carried out in the future.

**Table 6. Integration of the themes of Article 16 into the programme implementation systems\***

OP	Project selection	Management	Partnership	Monitoring etc.**	Other ***
'Algarve' (Portugal)					
'Aragon' (Spain)			✓	✓	
'Attica' (Greece)			✓	✓	✓
'Belgium - France'		✓		✓	
'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)' (Ireland)			✓	✓	
'Cantabria' (Spain)		✓	✓	✓	✓
'Central Hungary'		✓		✓	
'Central Moravia' (Czech Republic)	✓		✓		
'Champagne Ardenne' (France)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
'Development of Living Environment' (Estonia)	✓			✓	
'Digital Convergence' (Greece)	✓			✓	
'Entrepreneurship and Innovation' (Latvia)			✓	✓	
'Greece - Bulgaria'				✓	✓
'Health' (Slovakia)		✓	✓	✓	✓
'Increase of Economic Competitiveness' (Romania)			✓	✓	
'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland)	✓				
'Innovation and Knowledge' (Denmark)			✓		
'Italy - Malta'				✓	
'Lisbon' (Portugal)					
'Loire' (France)			✓		
'Lower Silesia' (Poland)	✓			✓	
'North Rhine-Westphalia' (Germany)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
'North West England' (UK)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
'North West Europe (NWE)'					
'Poland - Germany'					
'Prague' (Czech Republic)				✓	
'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania)		✓	✓	✓	✓
'Regional Development' (Bulgaria)	✓	✓		✓	
'Rhone-Alpes' (France)					
'Saxony' (Germany)					
'Sicily' (Italy)	✓			✓	✓
'Slovakia - Czech Republic'					
'Slovenia - Hungary'					

'South East Europe (SEE)'					
'South Great Plain'	✓	✓		✓	
'Southern Finland'				✓	
'Stockholm' (Sweden)		✓	✓	✓	✓
'Strengthening Regional Development Potentials' (Slovenia)			✓		
'Styria' (Austria)					
'Sustainable Development and Competitiveness' (Cyprus)					
'Sweden - Norway'	✓		✓	✓	
'Thüringen' (Germany)					
'Trento' (Italy)	✓	✓		✓	✓
'Tuscany' (Italy)	✓		✓	✓	✓
'United Kingdom - Ireland'	✓		✓	✓	
'Upper Austria'					
'Wallonia (Hainaut)' (Belgium)					
'Warminsko-Mazurskie' (Poland)					
'West Netherlands'					
'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK)	✓	✓	✓	✓	

\* The checked areas demonstrate which OPs are the most specific on practices which are relevant from the perspective of Article 16

\*\* Including information and publicity, monitoring, evaluation, reporting

\*\*\* This includes learning from previous experiences, ex-ante evaluation and impact assessments

## 3. CASES SELECTED FOR 15 GOOD PRACTICE STUDIES

### 3.1 Selection method

Based on the review of 50 OPs a sample of 15 cases was selected for further examination in order to identify and describe the good practices in greater detail. The tender specification sets the following aim for the case studies:

Understanding more deeply the influence of Article 16 requirements on the various stages of implementation.

The 15 cases were selected based on the review information, provided in the filled-in checklists (Annex 3). Basically the programmes which received the highest amount of scores '1' or '2' were chosen for the case studies. Before taking the decision to include (or otherwise) a programme into the sample of case studies, the answer of its MA to the e-mail based interview was also considered. Furthermore, a qualitative assessment was carried out in order to ensure that the sample covers adequately two important aspects:

- the three themes of Article 16 (gender equality, non-discrimination, accessibility for the disabled);
- various stages of implementation (programme design and programme management).

Such consideration was important in order to avoid a statistical effect, which could prevent some interesting practices from being included into the sample of case studies. I.e. as Task 2 dealt primarily with the texts of OPs, most of them are quite elaborate on programme design, yet they do not provide much information on programme implementation. Most of the programmes also tend to devote some attention to gender issues while the coverage of non-discrimination and, especially, accessibility questions is much more uneven. Therefore, if the choice was made relying solely on the assessments provided in the checklists, a risk would have occurred of a potential bias towards OPs which have detailed analytical or strategy/ priority axes sections and put a strong emphasis on gender aspect.

Moreover, the criteria of EU15/ EU12, welfare models, national-regional objectives were not considered as primary in the selection of case studies. First and foremost, the sample of 50 OPs was generated following these criteria and thus it was quite representative of all 316 OPs co-financed from ERDF and Cohesion fund in the period of 2007-2013. Meanwhile, in selecting case studies, the most important criterion was if there was an interesting practice (or practices) which others could learn from. Furthermore, an attempt was made not to select several OPs from the same country. Usually OPs within a single country tend to follow similar tradition in approaching the three themes. Therefore, the most elaborate among OPs from one country was selected as such



programme would usually encompass practices which are inherent in other OPs.

### 3.2. The OPs selected for case study analysis

Table 7 provides a list of OPs selected for case study analysis. All of the selected cases have some interesting practices in the programme design and/ or programme implementation stage (see Table 5 and Table 6). The following reasons determined the final selection of specific programmes:

- A. Overall approach.** Four OPs were identified as presenting an example of comprehensive integration of principles of Article 16 (see Section 2.1.1.). OP 'Stockholm' and 'North West England' were selected for case study analysis. OP 'West Wales and the Valleys' was not included among case studies because it would have been a second OP from the UK. OP 'United Kingdom – Ireland' was also not selected because cases studies from both the UK and Ireland are present in the case study sample. In addition this OP is focused on the theme of peace between two communities, which is highly contextual and specific to this region.
- B. Cross-border emphasis.** Cross-border OPs have some specific features, which may well be explored in order to address the issues of equal opportunities. E.g. they tend to allocate a bigger share of their expenditure to various 'soft' measures (such as training, awareness rising) which are traditionally seen as tools in promoting equality and non-discrimination. Therefore two of the stronger CBC programmes were selected 'Belgium - France' and 'Sweden - Norway'.
- C. The three themes.** The gender aspect is covered in an absolute majority of OPs (though the extent of this coverage tends to vary). However the representation of the themes of non-discrimination and accessibility for the disabled is much more uneven. Therefore some OPs were selected which give a relatively strong emphasis for these two themes. *Non-discrimination* issues are quite extensively addressed in the OP 'South Great Plain' (Hungary), (OP 'Health' (Slovakia), OP 'Southern Finland' (e.g. Roma population is given quite a lot of attention in the former two programmes; the issues of the ageing society are considered in the later OP). Meanwhile *accessibility for the disabled* implies different things depending on the type of infrastructure. Therefore three OPs were selected, which address the needs of the disabled in various contexts: information society infrastructure (OP 'Digital Convergence' (Greece)), education, training and social services infrastructure (OP 'Promotion of Cohesion' (Lithuania), transport and tourism infrastructure, access to buildings (OP 'Lower Silesia' (Poland)).
- D. Stages of implementation.** Many OPs demonstrate relevant practices at the programme design stage (see Table 5). However on programme implementation they provide less information (see Table 6). This does not necessarily mean that these programmes do not consider equal opportunities at all. On many issues the Member States had to provide only the most important rather than detailed information in the OP texts (e.g., selection criteria or composition of the Management Committee). These aspects tend to be addressed in detail in

various implementation acts and documents which follow the OP. However, to the extent the OPs do mention some specific practices<sup>5</sup>, several OPs were selected as they make a reference to tools and mechanisms which could be of potential interest to other OPs:

- Project selection (OP 'Champagne-Ardenne' (France): higher rate of subsidy for equal opportunities projects);
- Management (OP 'North Rhine-Westphalia' (Germany): specialised trainings on equal opportunities; OP Cantabria (Spain): (special Guide for evaluating strategic themes of equal opportunities between Women and Men);
- Monitoring and Reporting (OP 'Sicily' (Italy): monitoring committee will periodically (at least once a year) be informed on progress in equal opportunities);
- Partnership (OP 'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)' (Ireland): an elaborated mechanism of consultation and involvement).

Table 7 lists all the OPs selected for case study analysis and indicates briefly the rationale. However, importantly, all the selected OPs demonstrate relevant practices not on one, but on a few aspects, themes or stages of implementation. Indeed, individual chapters of OP and by implication separate stages of implementation are not unrelated to each other. Therefore if one aspect of an OP is strong (say, partnership) this does have repercussions to programme design, monitoring and other processes. All in all, each of the selected OPs is interesting as a case, and not as one isolated practice. A detailed case study analysis (which will examine not only the texts of OPs but also other primary and secondary sources) should reveal a more comprehensive picture on how the themes of Article 16 are integrated into the overall intervention and implementation logic of the OP.

**Table 7. OPs selected for the case study analysis**

<b>OP CCI No and name</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>Overall approach to integration of principles of Article 16</b>	
2007SE162PO005 Operational Programme 'Stockholm'	A case of comprehensive integration
2007UK162PO008 Operational Programme 'North West England'	A case of comprehensive integration
<b>Cross-border emphasis</b>	
2007CB163PO063 Operational Programme 'Belgium - France'	CBC programme
2007CB163PO016 Operational Programme 'Sweden - Norway'	CBC programme
<b>The three themes</b>	
2007HU161PO004 Operational Programme 'South Great Plain'	Emphasis on non-discrimination (including Roma)
2007SK161PO005 Operational Programme 'Health'	Emphasis on non-discrimination (including Roma)
2007FI162PO004 Operational Programme 'Southern Finland'	Emphasis on non-discrimination (ageing society)

<sup>5</sup> The answers of MAs to the e-mail based survey were also considered

2007GR161PO002 Operational Programme 'Digital Convergence'	Emphasis of accessibility for the disabled to information society infrastructure
2007LT161PO001 Operational Programme 'Promotion of Cohesion'	Emphasis of accessibility for the disabled to education, training and social services infrastructure
2007PL161PO005 Operational Programme 'Lower Silesia'	Emphasis of accessibility for the disabled to transport, tourism infrastructure, access to buildings
<b>Stages of implementation</b>	
2007FR162PO008 Operational Programme 'Champagne Ardenne'	Project selection
2007DE162PO007 Operational Programme 'North Rhine-Westphalia'	Programme management
2007ES162PO001 Operational Programme 'Cantabria'	Programme management
2007IT161PO011 Operational Programme 'Sicily'	Monitoring and reporting
2007IE162PO001 Operational Programme 'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)'	Partnership

The distribution of OPs selected for case studies in terms of SFs objectives, EU15/ EU12 and other criteria is provided in Table 8.

**Table 8. The distribution of OPs selected for case studies according to objectives, EU12/ EU15 and other criteria**

Criteria		No of cases
<b>Balance of objectives</b>	Convergence	6
	Competitiveness	7
	Territorial Co-operation	2
<b>Balance between national/ sectoral and regional OPs</b>	National/ sectoral	3
	Regional	10
	Transnational (cross-border)	2
<b>Balance between EU15 and EU12 MS</b>	EU15	9 (+2 cross-border)
	EU12 (the MS which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007)	4
<b>Contextual balance, based on welfare regimes</b>	Nordic model	2 (+1 cross-border)
	Atlantic (Anglo-Saxon) model	2
	Central European (Continental) model	2 (+1 cross-border)
	Southern European model	4
	Eastern European model	3
	Baltic model	1
	South-East European model	0

The following 15 sub-sections provide a short description of each OP selected for the case study analysis. In the description the most relevant practices (appearing in the OP texts and MA responses to the interview question) are highlighted.

### 3.2.1. 2007SE162P0005 Operational Programme 'Stockholm'

This programme comprehensively integrates the principles stated in Article 16. Especially well-pronounced are the dimensions of gender equality and non-discrimination. The programme states that all projects will have to deal with the horizontal criteria; it is expected that this will have a positive effect on the economic growth. There also is a strong **strategic** commitment to pursue the horizontal criteria in all stages of programme implementation and this ambition is indeed well-reflected in the text.

The **analysis** carried out in the programme discusses such issues as employment rates between men and women, the share of new enterprises (by gender), education (by gender), integration of foreign population and mental health. A number of important challenges are identified:

- gender-based segregation of the labour market (women's wage levels are lower, they dominate in some low-growth employment sectors (e.g. care services), women establish fewer new enterprises and own fewer businesses);
- public transport system is not always planned on the basis of women's needs;
- women and young people (both of local and foreign origin), men of foreign origin, and enterprises in the social economy sector have more difficulties getting support and financing for their ideas;
- widening gaps and growing segregation in the labour market of various disadvantaged groups, discriminating structures of the society, training possibilities are often insufficient (including Swedish language courses and validation of education documents).

Within the presentation of each of the three major **priority axes** ('1. Innovative environment of the city', '2. Development of enterprises', '3. Accessibility'), the three general horizontal criteria, emphasised in the programme (1. Equality between men and women; 2. Integration and diversity; 3. Environment) are described in a separate sub-section. The presentation is generally well-linked with the analysis part of the document – i.e., the major findings of the analysis are shortly reiterated, and indications are provided how the identified problems will be tackled under a respective priority. Among other relevant **measures**, the OP intends to provide investment to support enterprises started by women, their networking, cooperation with the R&D sector and clusters. The programme will also promote entrepreneurship among men and women of foreign origin (especially among the young) by improving their access to capital and changing the attitudes in the society. Various infrastructure investments will help to improve access to work and education for people living in areas with a high percentage of population of a foreign origin.

Two levels of **indicators** are distinguished: those of programme level and those at the level of specific priorities. Speaking of programme-level indicators, there are two sets of them. One, provided in the 'Strategy' part of the document, includes output and result indicators (most of which are disaggregated by gender and one disadvantaged group – people of foreign origin); meanwhile, Annex 1 ('Indicators') provides a special section 'Horizontal classification criteria', which reflect the number of projects related

to specific horizontal themes (aimed directly to tackle a theme, having a positive/negative impact on a theme, etc.). Priority-level indicators concern separate priorities of the programme, they are presented in the description of specific priorities. Some examples of the result indicators used by the programme:

- 1300 new jobs created, of which at least 40% for women/men and 25% for people of foreign origin;
- 300 new enterprises, of which at least 40% owned by women/men and 25% are owned by people of foreign origin.

Each project owner will be expected to explain the expected impact of the project in terms of horizontal criteria: integration, equality and environment. In turn, the OP includes a commitment that the **selection** criteria, based on the programme goal and ambitions, will have specific elements related to the horizontal criteria. The real-life effect of the selection criteria, concerning the horizontal priorities, will be monitored and, if necessary, measures will be undertaken in order to avoid or minimise significant negative impact.

The programme hints at various important **management** practices aimed at integrating better the horizontal criteria into the programme's implementation. It is stated that various tools – such as information materials, instructions/recommendations, training activities, indicators, checklists, etc. – must be developed on a continuous basis. Such activities will be based on the experience of previous programmes. The horizontal criteria will also be taken into account in the public procurement actions of the Managing Authority.

In order to be able to integrate the horizontal criteria in the implementation, one requires knowledge of these issues among project participants, public servants working with projects and decision-makers. Therefore training will be offered to the above-mentioned groups continuously during the whole programme period. In the programme implementation, various expert input concerning the horizontal criteria – e.g., from regional administration – will be taken into account. The Managing Authority will work in order to make sure that knowledge and competences of existing organisational structures – such as equal opportunities experts in the regional administration, regional resource centres, environmental authorities, etc. – are actively put into effect during implementation.

Furthermore, for **information** and **monitoring** purposes special 'featured' criteria are planned. At the beginning of the programme (one third of its duration), such 'featured' criterion will be 'integration and diversity'; afterwards other criteria will be announced. Thematic activities can include, among others, development and dissemination of knowledge about that specific field, as well as a special focus during the monitoring and evaluation processes. The OP also intends to promote **partnership**, exchange of experience and networking. For example, a certain number of projects would record in detail how they are dealing with the horizontal criteria and what is their situation is in this respect. Experiences from these projects would then form a basis for further thematic activities. Meanwhile, the network activities transcending the programme limits both with the ERDF and the ESF will be aimed

at taking advantage of the experience from earlier and current programming periods.

### **3.2.2. 2007UK162PO008 Operational Programme 'North West England'**

This OP is a good example of comprehensive integration of Article 16. It stays focussed on the cross-cutting themes throughout the text and is one of only two programmes to have commissioned an **equality impact assessment**.

A separate part of the socio-economic **analysis** is reserved to equality and diversity issues (defined as "the promotion of equal opportunities for women, BME communities, disabled people and the over 50s") and deals with them head-on. Extensive data by gender, ethnic group, disability, beliefs and sexual orientation is provided, especially in the sphere of employment. Lack of education and lower employment rates are presented as **challenges** faced by the disadvantaged groups among which women and black and ethnic minorities figure most prominently.

There is an indication in the context analysis already that the under-representation of certain groups in the labour market "will require interventions that match the complex mix of factors that create barriers". The issue of worklessness of black and ethnic minority groups, the disabled and lone parents is reiterated in the SWOT analysis which nevertheless also argues that "high levels of entrepreneurialism in some ethnic minority groups" is one of the region's strength.

4 overarching programme **targets** are set for the **indicators** of 'gross jobs created' and 'gross jobs safeguarded' filled by women and men. Moreover, each **priority axis** has a note relating it to 'equality and diversity', including clauses on women, other disadvantaged groups and often emphasizing the disabled access (examples: "any facilities improved will need to be accessible to all (especially people with disabilities)"; "all projects supported have suitable arrangements to ensure access to services for all under-represented groups and that there is no discrimination"; "specific recognition given to managers from under-represented groups"). Among the intended **measures**, encouraging the entrepreneurship of the disadvantaged groups and helping them into employment are mentioned.

A lot of **national anti-discrimination** (focussed on the grounds of race, gender, age and disability) **documents** are cited, proving UK's and region's long-lasting preoccupation with equality and diversity. As for disabled access specifically, Department of Communities and Local Government's Disability Equality Scheme devoting substantial attention to the questions of access to information and physical accessibility for the disabled is mentioned.

Substantial attention is devoted to the integration of the cross-cutting themes (CCTs) into the **management** and implementation system: special officers, equality 'toolkits' aimed at programme managers, appraisers and applicants, appropriate training of the staff and targeted funding are envisaged. At the **project selection** stage, all projects submitted are set to be assessed in terms of their contribution to equality and diversity goals.

The programme seeks to balance the Programme **Monitoring Committee** in terms of gender. It will also include 'CCT (i.e. cross-cutting themes) champions' among its members. Participation of the CCT champions should help to engage different stakeholder groups and is to be encouraged during all stages of programme implementation.

### **3.2.3. 2007CB163PO063 Operational Programme 'Belgium - France'**

In the section devoted to cross-cutting priorities the programme states that it has "to respond to a number of preoccupations and ambitions, taking a central place in macroeconomic and social policies of the European Commission, featured in the Gothenburg and Lisbon agendas". One of such themes is: "pursuing the objective of equal opportunities: fight against any type of inequality (men/women, disabled, people from different locations). In the context of trans-border cooperation, a particular attention must be paid to the respect of different cultures, including promotion of knowledge of several languages".

The **analysis** section of the programme devotes quite a lot of attention to the issues of unemployment and economic activity across the region. It concludes that this has a gender dimension as in certain territories the economic activity of women is lower than that of men. As a result, the OP refers to such challenges as the insufficient number of women starting SMEs and the necessity to develop childcare services which would allow women to participate more actively in the labour force. Youth unemployment is a notable problem, which is related to insufficient level of education and qualification. At the other end of age spectrum, the ageing population faces difficulties to access the services on both sides of the border while the need for assistance and financial resources (in order to help this age group) is increasing. Therefore, in its **priority axes** section the OP foresees support for a number of measures to address these issues, namely:

- combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace;
- action to reduce early school leaving, gender-based segregation of subjects and improve access to and quality of the initial vocational training and tertiary education;
- facilitating access to childcare and care for dependent persons;
- healthcare and social services to population on both sides of the border.

As for the programme **indicators**, at the level of results the OP intends to measure the number of actions targeted at the discriminated groups and the number of persons learning a foreign language. At the level of impacts the programme states that it is to assess the extent to which it has contributed to promoting opportunities for the discriminated/exposed groups (women, unqualified persons, the disabled). However, no further detail is provided as to how this assessment is to be carried out and according to what criteria.

The OP clearly attempts to integrate the three themes into its **management** structure. It mentions that all the authorities

(managing, certifying, audit) will have to “ensure compliance with Community and national obligations in the fields of <...> equal opportunities of men and women”. It also includes a commitment that the institutions and services working in the field of equal opportunities will be engaged in a preliminary examination, management and monitoring of projects of the programme. In the **Monitoring** Committee a balanced representation of women and men is to be ensured. This Committee will also include representatives of services, responsible for equal opportunities.

### **3.2.4. 2007CB163PO016 Operational Programme 'Sweden - Norway'**

In the section devoted to cross-cutting issues, this OP states that “the whole implementation of the programme will be cross-cut by certain principal points and values – so called horizontal criteria. They will be taken into account in the project selection, evaluation and implementation of project activities, irrespectively of project activity area”. It appears from the text that during programme preparation extensive **partnership** activities took place and there was a significant interaction with and feedback from various groups of the society. However, one can only presume that the groups representing the three themes of interest for this study were involved actively, as this is not specified anywhere in the text. In the case study this will be analysed in more detail.

In the **analysis part** the programme puts a fairly strong emphasis on the gender equality dimension. Some aspects of non-discrimination are also touched upon while accessibility for disabled persons is hardly mentioned. Several gender-related challenges are outlined, such as differing occupational, educational, mobility and commuting patterns. Emigration of young people from the region is a matter of concern too. Thus, at the **strategic level** the programme sets an aim to support the contribution of both genders to the regional economy.

Certain **indicators** of the programme in the areas such as economic growth and attractive living environment are disaggregated by gender and by the age of participants (number of women / men (including young people) taking part in the project, Number of people aged 15-24 taking part in project). The OP also contains a commitment for a responsible public official to assess all projects in terms of horizontal criteria giving a mark from 1 to 3 and registering it with the official project administration system STINS/NYPS. In addition to equality, projects are also to be assessed from the perspective of diversity and integration (though the later aspect is hardly touched upon in the actual text of the programme). The following criteria will be used for such assessment:

- No. of projects which aim directly to increase equality
- No. of projects which have predominantly positive effect from the equality perspective
- No. of projects which have predominantly negative effect from the equality perspective
- No. of projects which aim directly to increase diversity and integration
- No. of projects which have predominantly positive effect from the perspective of diversity and integration
- No. of projects which have predominantly negative effect from the perspective of diversity and integration



In the description of each of the three **priority axes** of the programme (A. Economic growth; B. Attractive living environment; C: Technical assistance), a sub-section on horizontal **selection** criteria is included. It is stated that "when selecting projects for EU financing, one shall always take into account the horizontal criteria of trans-border cooperation, better environment, equality between women and men, and ethnic diversity and integration, notwithstanding what specific area of activities a project concerns". A more detailed case study could reveal a more detailed mechanism as to how such a principle is being followed.

### **3.2.5. 2007HU161PO004 Operational Programme 'South Great Plain'**

The programme refers to Article 16 in several chapters. It is definitely concerned about the multiple disadvantages that the Hungarian Roma population is subjected to and about the lack of the disabled access in public transport and in public institution buildings which obstructs the use of social services by the disabled. The situation of women (or even less so – of any other groups), is addressed less explicitly. Perhaps these groups are not perceived to be in a very disadvantaged position: in fact, given the statistical data in the analysis, women seem to be better off compared to men except for the lack of childcare facilities.

In the **analysis** part the programme provides a gender perspective on issues such as economic activity and suicide rates. It also devotes a short section to the situation of Roma population. It draws attention to the problem of insufficient disabled access to buildings. Therefore, under different **priority axes** a number of important measures are identified. Day nursery centres are to be established in order to help women to return to employment. Investments into transport and public services infrastructure will have to comply with the requirements of disabled access. The programme also lists a number of the so-called 'flagship programmes', which will make a positive contribution towards the improvement of the Roma situation:

- opportunities for those living in the most backward regions;
- opportunities for children;
- school of the 21st century.

Among the **indicators** to-be-followed the OP mentions:

- no. of women employed full-time in jobs created by the programme;
- no. of disadvantaged people employed full-time in jobs created by the programme;
- no. of disadvantaged students learning in developed schools.

Regarding the **project selection** process, at the very least the applicants will be expected to substantively address the issue of equal opportunities and to take steps towards implementing equal opportunities in their organisation. Also in the other section of the programme it is stated that priority will be given to projects integrating the principles of equal opportunities. The programme also states that projects financed from Structural Funds "must create synergies with targeted interventions implemented in the course of the 'Decade of Roma Integration' programme, mainly in the fields of education, employment, housing and health care".

Some endeavours will be also undertaken to integrate equal opportunities into the **management** process and **information/publicity** actions. Hence there is a commitment to give 'special attention' to providing direct information and help with project generation and implementation to organizations representing the most disadvantaged groups. Managing Authority is also to develop guidelines and compile an Operational Manual in order to ensure the full respect of the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. The Managing Authority is also put in charge of disseminating good practices and ensuring advice for beneficiaries on the practical application of horizontal principles in project implementation.

As for **monitoring arrangements**, the OP mentions that half of the members of the Monitoring Committee should be representatives of NGOs, including, in particular:

- at least one member representing an organisation active in the field of equal opportunities between men and women;
- at least one member representing an organisation of Roma people;
- at least one member representing an organisation of disabled people.

During the process of OP implementation NGO representatives will be encouraged to provide opinions at all stages and will be invited to take part in project selection committees. Also, special **reports** are to be produced on the compliance with the principles of sustainability and non-discrimination. Finally, a commitment is also undertaken to carry out a 'comprehensive evaluation' of compliance with the horizontal principles in 2008, 2010, and 2012.

### **3.2.6. 2007SK161P0005 Operational Programme 'Health'**

This OP concentrates on one specific sector and constitutes an example of how the principles of Article 16 could be integrated into healthcare policy. Various aspects of equal opportunities are included in the **analysis** part rather comprehensively. A special chapter is devoted to the "Selected Characteristics of Health Condition of Marginalised Roma Communities (MRC)" while the ongoing unfavourable social situation of the MRC is recognized as a threat in SWOT analysis. The **strategy** of the programme emphasises the need to create "an enhanced access to all forms of medical equipment and facilities". The following **measures** are to contribute to this objective:

- purchase and training of the personnel in the operation of the mobile mammography units in order to decrease female mortality of breast cancer;
- implementation of healthcare infrastructure projects with segregated or separated Roma settlements;
- reconstruction and modernization of existing facilities, which has to be realized in a way, which would take into account, among other things, the principle of barrier-free entrance for immobile persons.

Some relevant **indicators** are mentioned, among them, the core impact indicator ('number of created work positions') disaggregated by gender. Other indicators will measure the 'value of projects

identified by The Slovak Government Office (SGO) as focused on MRC'; 'number of created work positions exclusively for MRC'.

All project applicants will be required to assess equal opportunity aspects in their applications. The projects having an impact on equal opportunities will also have to include indicators to monitor such an impact. The project **selection** criteria (including the equal opportunities dimension) are still to be elaborated. However, the programme contains a commitment that guidelines on integration of equal opportunities will be provided for those involved in the management of the programme, and training will also be offered.

Some other important **management** actions are also foreseen. A ministry, responsible for equal opportunity integration will establish a support centre providing the beneficiaries (of all OPs) with assistance in integrating the equal opportunities aspect. Each Managing Authority will also appoint a contact person, who will provide relevant advice to beneficiaries during all stages of the project cycle. Equality among men and women will be one of the principles to follow in designing the composition of the **Monitoring Committee**. This Committee will also include a representative of an institution in charge of Roma Communities. As for programme **evaluation**, the OP refers to 'continuous evaluations' which will focus on the implementation of each horizontal priority. When implementation of the programme will be completed, an evaluation of the impact of projects addressing the horizontal priorities will be carried out.

### **3.2.7. 2007FI162PO004 Operational Programme 'Southern Finland'**

The OP states that at the very least it will avoid putting anyone in an unequal position on the basis of age, race, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation. It also commits to take equal opportunities into account in implementing all activities.

The **analysis part** of the programme points towards some important challenges, such as: entrepreneurship rate of women, accessibility to services by older persons and people living in remote areas, labour market entry barriers for immigrants. Thus the programme includes improvement of female entrepreneurship and increasing labour market participation of women, promotion of regional equality and equality between different age groups among its **objectives**. A number of relevant **measures** is foreseen. In order to support women entrepreneurs the OP intends to invest into awareness-raising, networking and support for innovations. Immigrants will be supported by providing business services. Development of IT solutions will help to improve accessibility of public services for those living in remote areas (e.g. older persons). Among its **indicators** the programme intends to measure resources allocated for projects promoting equal opportunities.

The OP pledges to take equal opportunities into account during the **project selection** process. It also mentions that gender equality NGOs will be represented in regional **Management Committees** and the gender balance of its members will be taken into account. It is also claimed that **information measures** will be designed to correspond to the needs of each target group, though one may only presume that the groups mentioned in Article 16 will be addressed

here. In the answer to the interview question the Managing Authority mentioned that a brochure on the "leverage from the EU for a future of equality" was published on the web.

### **3.2.8. 2007GR161PO002 Operational Programme 'Digital Convergence'**

This OP aims to support development in one specific area, namely, the information society. Correspondingly, the implications of Article 16 are analysed and integrated through this perspective. Among the groups mentioned in Article 16 the programme concentrates on women and on the disabled (especially, the accessibility aspect).

The **analysis** carried out in the programme text shows that in terms of the use of ICT, e-commerce and internet women tend to be in an disadvantaged position. The same is true for the disabled. At the **strategic** level the programme seeks to contribute to productivity improvement as well as to better life quality and intends to achieve it by investing (among other **measures**) in the development of digital government services and information society infrastructure. The programme hints that in the **selection process** some support will be allocated to projects which are important from the perspective of gender equality and/ or contribute to the improvement of accessibility for the disabled.

Some institutional decisions will allow to integrate gender equality into the programme **management** and **monitoring** structure. It is mentioned that among the members of Monitoring Committee there will have to be (to the extent it is possible) an equal number of men and women. Representatives from institutions responsible for the promotion of gender equality as well as from National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities will be included in the Monitoring Committee as permanent members. The Roma population network will also be invited to take part.

### **3.2.9. 2007LT161PO001 Operational Programme 'Promotion of Cohesion'**

There is no direct reference to Article 16 in any part of this OP, however, the text reflects the general principles derived from this article quite well. Gender equality and equal opportunities are acknowledged as horizontal principles and are referred to repeatedly. As this programme invests first and foremost into infrastructure, the issue of accessibility for the disabled is also explicitly addressed.

The **analysis** part of the Lithuanian OP provides quite a lot of statistics concerning the groups mentioned in Article 16. A number of important challenges are identified, such as disadvantaged situation of women, disabled and other groups in the labour market, participation of discriminated groups in education and training, accessibility of infrastructure and various services to the disabled. These challenges are summarised in the SWOT analysis. In turn, at the **strategic level**, one of the Programme's objectives and one priority is specifically dedicated to improve the situation (infrastructure and services) for the disabled and for the disadvantaged groups.

Various measures are listed under different **priority axes**, such as development of social care centres for the disadvantaged, complex help centres for families, adaptation of social housing to the disabled, development and renovation of social rehabilitation centres for the disabled, investment into modern information technologies in order to adapt the physical environment for the disabled. Relevant **indicators** are presented at both the result and strategic context level:

- strategic context: level of female employment;
- strategic context indicator: differences in wages between men and women;
- strategic context indicator: share of the disabled in employment;
- result level indicator: number of the disabled, people that suffer social exclusion, directly benefiting from the investments into non-institutional social services and development of infrastructure.

Among other **management** measures the programme foresees to disseminate various materials (publications, programmes, reports, guides, case studies, good practice examples of accomplished projects) to potential beneficiaries, other target groups and the society at large. Yearly **reports** on implementation of structural funds will be produced and the data used in this report will be disaggregated by gender. As a part of **information** campaign conferences, seminars, and fairs will be organised to inform the people from the target groups on the opportunities provided by the OP.

The **monitoring** provisions indicate that half of the members in the Monitoring Committee will be representatives of social, economic and regional partners. In its response to the interview question the MA also mentioned that a working group for monitoring and implementation of horizontal priorities was set up to analyse relevant information, discuss issues and submit proposals. This group was involved closely in the preparation of Guidelines on Implementation of the Horizontal Priorities, which were approved in April 2009. These Guidelines are aimed to help the responsible institutions to integrate the horizontal priorities into the reports on OP implementation.

### **3.2.10. 2007PL161PO005 Operational Programme 'Lower Silesia'**

This is a regional OP, yet it is concentrated quite extensively on infrastructure development. Therefore, it puts quite a strong emphasis on the aspect of accessibility for the disabled. Meanwhile, in the **strategy** part the programme refers explicitly to Article 16 and states that following this article it takes into account "the principle of equal opportunity in the labour market, the needs of disabled persons and ethnic minorities".

The OP provides a rather detailed **analysis** of the situation of men and women in the labour market. Laeken indicators on social inclusion are referred-to. The programme puts a strong emphasis on the problem of a very high unemployment rate among the disabled, which is due to the lack of qualification as well as to the lack of access to potential workplaces. Furthermore, a significant amount of housing stock is below the decent standard; such buildings are usually inhabited by the elderly and Roma. One of the

programme **indicators** (No. of gross workplaces created) will be disaggregated by gender.

Among the measures listed under various **priority axes**, those aimed at improving accessibility for the disabled are the most specific. For example, it is mentioned that the programme will invest into overcoming barriers faced by the disabled in the transport sector, support improvements of accessibility to buildings and better access of the disabled to tourist infrastructure as well as cultural heritage structures. The OP also claims that the needs of the disadvantaged groups will be taken into account when promoting development of entrepreneurship, quality of education and other sectors. Furthermore, Local Revitalisation Programmes (concern for disparities between urban and rural areas is quite pronounced) and their implementation is said to be adjusted to the needs of ethnic minorities and the disabled.

The OP indicates that in some areas during the project **selection** process priority will be given to households with low income, the disabled, immigrants, national minorities, ethnic minorities or refugees (provision of adequate housing), and the disabled and the elderly (integration of information systems at the regional and national level). In answering the interview question the MA mentioned that among the selection criteria there is a requirement for all projects to have at least a neutral influence on horizontal policies (namely gender equality, information society and environment). Additional points are awarded to projects contributing to gender equality.

OP's **Communication Plan** mentions regular meetings with NGOs as well as the representatives of an equality body. It is also stated that among the members of the **Monitoring** Committee there will be 'an adequate number of women'. Organisations dealing with gender equality will be represented in this Committee, too.

### **3.2.11. 2007FR162PO008 Operational Programme 'Champagne Ardenne'**

The OP claims to have integrated the principles stated in Article 16 horizontally in all stages and in various areas (innovation, economy, environment and territorial cohesion). The regional delegate for Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities was actively involved in the programme preparation process. Training on equal opportunity issues was conducted for those involved in drafting of the programme.

The OP identified a number of relevant **measures**, such as support to help the young women to develop a career in science. Also credits for business start-ups by women and emphasis on equal opportunities in increasing public awareness on business support services. The organisations having more than 1000 employees will be encouraged to develop child support services. Accessibility for the disabled is also touched upon: this aspect is to be taken into account in providing support to transport. The **indicators** on employment and unemployment are disaggregated by gender.

The programme mentions that project applicants will have to explain the equal opportunities dimension. Among the projects shortlisted **for selection**, priority will be given to those taking

equal opportunities into account. Before taking funding decisions, the opinion of the regional delegate for women's rights will be sought. In addition, projects with a clear equal opportunities dimension may be awarded a higher rate of subsidy. In the contract agreement on the award of subsidy there will be a provision that the beneficiary will avoid any discrimination (e.g. in employing people, etc.). Furthermore, in the interview the Managing Authority mentioned that an elaborate tool to help project applicants to integrate gender perspective better into their projects was prepared.

The Managing Authority will endeavour to **increase awareness** with regard to equal opportunities of those involved in **managing** projects. Guidelines will be issued to services in charge of assisting project promoters, aimed at improving understanding of the services' employees with regard to equal opportunities issues. Good practice projects will be publicised. The relevant aspects will also be analysed in the **Annual Report**.

### **3.2.12. 2007DE162PO007 Operational Programme 'North Rhine-Westphalia'**

Among the three main themes of this study, the Operational Programme 'North Rhine-Westphalia' is also primarily concerned with the gender aspect. In the **analysis part** information on employment/ unemployment, access to jobs and career and average earnings is provided disaggregated by gender. Among the discriminated groups the difficulties faced by migrants to enter the job market and to gain access to services which would allow them to develop relevant qualifications are highlighted.

At the **strategic level** the programme intends to encourage women to pursue technical careers, to get more actively involved in research and innovation (in the technical fields), and to become more entrepreneurial. This in turn implies funding **such measures** as assistance, coaching, improved access to credit, and information campaigns. The OP also intends to provide assistance to immigrants in qualification development and advancement of entrepreneurship. The **indicators** of achievement (employment, education, entrepreneurship) are disaggregated by gender.

The implementation of horizontal priorities (sustainable development and gender equality) and non-discrimination is envisaged on the programme and project level. On the programme level, the horizontal objectives are taken into account in all stages of the programme cycle. Special 'thematic' representatives were involved in **programme preparation** and in the committees for its implementation and **monitoring**. In all **evaluations** the implementation of gender equality and non-discrimination is also to be addressed as well as taken into account during project **selection**. Special events, trainings and consultations are planned, to be implemented by the Centre 'Woman in Profession and Technology'. There is also a possibility that a process-oriented gender monitoring will be carried out (for infrastructure projects in particular).

### 3.2.13. 2007ES162PO001 Operational Programme 'Cantabria'

This programme considers equal opportunities for men and women a horizontal priority. Apparently, the Directorate General of Women of the Cantabrian government was closely involved in the preparation process. At least partly such co-operation may be attributed to lessons learned in the period of 2000-2006 as the analysis of the previous OP suggested that equal opportunities should be better taken into account.

Correspondingly, substantive attention is given to various aspects of gender equality in the sections dealing with the analysis of situation, strategy and priority axes. For example, in the **analysis part** the figures for employment and unemployment, wages, level of education are provided for both genders. Furthermore, two separate sub-sections focus on the issues of (a) participation of men and women in technological development and innovation; (b) knowledge and use of information technologies by men and women.

The programme assesses the relevance of a gender-based action under each five of its **priority axes**. It concludes that the case for a gender-specific action is the strongest in the axis of knowledge economy, innovation and development of entrepreneurship. Here access to and a more intensive use of ICT by women is to be promoted. Meanwhile, in the areas of environment and sustainable development gender differences are not that relevant. Still, the programme intends to support (a) actions aimed to ensure equal access of men and women to infrastructure and (b) an increase of the number of women working in the environment sector. Under the technical assistance priority an intention to co-finance interventions aiming to publicize the progress on gender equality is expressed. The OP also has a few relevant **indicators**. It intends to measure:

- No. of projects aiming to develop equal opportunities and social inclusion for minorities and youngsters;
- No. of women participating in the projects;
- No. of jobs created (disaggregated by gender).

As for the **management** of the programme and **partnership**, a representative of Directorate General of Women is among the members of the Monitoring Committee. In the e-mail interview the Managing Authority indicated that Institute of Women took an active part in providing technical assistance (advice, comments on various documents) to the institutions involved in management and monitoring of the OP. This Institute was actively involved into preparation of Guide for Evaluating Strategic Themes of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (to be used in the implementation of all OPs). The OP also states an intention to carry out a **gender impact assessment** of the co-financed actions. Furthermore, the **evaluation** of the programme (to be carried out by an external organisation) will also have to touch upon gender issues (as there is an intention to request the contractor to include a gender affairs specialist into its expert team).



### 3.2.14. 2007IT161PO011 Operational Programme 'Sicily'

This programme devotes quite a lot of attention to the situation of women and to immigrant groups. It devotes a special **analysis** section to the situation of women in the labour market (low rate of employment, lower rate of security on the labour market (flexible contracts), domination of women in the sector of lower-paid services, difficulties to receive childcare services, etc.). The question of non-discrimination is addressed through the perspective of women with disabilities (double discrimination); integration difficulties faced by immigrants are also presented.

The OP claims that the perspectives of gender equality and non-discrimination are specifically integrated into two **priority axes**:

- promotion of entrepreneurship and competitiveness of local productive systems;
- urban sustainable development.

The following **measures** (relevant from the perspective of equal opportunities) are projected: development of childcare services for children between 0 and 3; general development of the access to social services; systems of pedestrian mobility for the disabled. Hence the **indicator** concerning the number of children between 0 and 3 in childcare services is indirectly relevant, too. At least under one axis the programme states that the projects addressing equal opportunities will be given priority; only the further case study could show if this is true for other priority axes.

The **Monitoring** Committee will include a representative from the institution responsible for equal opportunities. Furthermore, the programme mentions a **report** describing progress in the field of equal opportunities will be regularly submitted to this Committee.

### 3.2.15. 2007IE162PO001 Operational Programme 'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)

The OP shows Ireland's preoccupation with the dimensions of Article 16 on the national level: apparently the Irish legislation is even more elaborate on non-discrimination than the EU law and this country draws on substantial experience in combating discrimination and mainstreaming equality. **Partnership** process is also well developed in Ireland and is relevant and functional not only in the context of EU-supported but also national policies. The organisations representing the three themes of Article 16 take part in this partnership process; they were consulted and provided input during the drafting process of the OP.

Based on **analysis**, the programme identifies a number of important challenges. It states "the sectors that are experiencing reduced employment levels tend to be comprised mainly of male employees, while expanding sectors (with the exception of construction) tend to be more gender balanced". Also, "the proportion of women who have recently set up new businesses is low compared with the number set up by men and is also low by international standards". Among the weaknesses identified in SWOT analysis it is mentioned that childcare facilities are insufficiently affordable and accessible. From the perspective of non-discrimination, inequality continues to persist on various grounds, all areas of service provision and also access to and achievements

in the workplace. Yet the programme is not very specific as to what **measures** it will undertake to address equal opportunities under each of its **priority axes**. It mentions, for example, that support will be provided to 'Women in Business' networks, facilitation of co-operation between different actors and partners. Still, a detailed case study would provide a more comprehensive list of actions. Among the performance **indicators** the indicator 'No. of recipients of micro-enterprise training' is disaggregated by gender and even its target value is given.

As stated in the OP, the projects will be assessed on the basis of their compliance with equal opportunity requirements. This indeed will be "one of the principles to guide the **selection** process for operations to be financed under this OP". The programme also states that "intermediary bodies will be required to incorporate accessibility for disabled persons as a criterion to be observed in co-funded public facilities".

Article 16-related considerations also appear in the description of the programme **management process**. The OP mentions that Equality Authority will provide support to intermediary bodies in assessing the impact of their measures in terms of equality and in incorporating an equality dimension, as appropriate, in project design and delivery. In its answer to the interview question the Managing Authority noted that a condition has been included in the administrative agreements between the MA and each intermediate body requiring intermediate bodies to report annually on the horizontal principles in an agreed format.

When it comes to **monitoring arrangements**, the Programme Monitoring Committee is to include representatives from appropriate statutory body(-ies) to represent each horizontal interest, including social inclusion, gender equality and sustainable development. Moreover, "gender balance will be promoted on the Monitoring Committee". There also is a reference to commitment of the Managing Authority to track "the impact on the Equal Opportunities Horizontal Principle at implementation level to ensure compliance with the requirement".

## 4. NEXT STEPS

During the next stage of the study (June – July) 2009 the case studies (Task 3 of the assignment) will be carried out, and conclusions and recommendations (Task 4) will be finalised. They will be a part of the Final Report which is due on 15 July 2009.

The methodology for the case studies (process, structure, questions) was outlined in the Inception Report (see Annex 7). However it will be further developed taking into account the results of a pilot case study and comments from the expert team. The structure and methodology for conclusions and recommendations was also presented in the Inception Report and is included into Annex 8. Based on the experience gained during the OP review process and in conducting the case studies a self-assessment guide will be prepared (to be used by programme authorities for assessing the extent to which the provisions of Article 16 are reflected in the design and implementation of their OPs).